UN-ASEAN Partnering for Peace?

South East Asian Powers and contributions to Peacekeeping Operations

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Heading Level One

Heading Level Two

Abstract

Regions are becoming increasingly central to both the implementation and claims to legitimacy of UN peacekeeping operations. In 2008, in the UN Secretary General published a report on the relationship between the UN and Regional Organisations (S/2008/186**), highlighting that UN-regional partnerships should develop to entail wider capacity building activities, define and refine the responsibilities of regions and the UN in both Chapter VIII and non-chapter VIII activities, and perform functions in support of disarmament and mediation.

However, ten years after the UN Secretary General's report and four years after the HIPPO report there is still an urgent need to understand how, and in response to what drivers, are UN peacekeeping operations changing? In this paper I argue that because of the UN's approach to partnerships it excludes learning from the contributions of other global potential partners including ASEAN. As a result, although there are pathways that make it possible for such a transfer of knowledge and experience, but these are often blocked – or perhaps just obscured – by the practices within the UN; for example, the institutional stickiness around partnerships.

Introduction

Regions are becoming increasingly central to both the implementation and claims to legitimacy of UN peacekeeping operations. In 2008, in the UN Secretary General published a report on the relationship between the UN and Regional Organisations (S/2008/186**), highlighting that UN-regional partnerships should develop to entail wider capacity building activities, define and refine the responsibilities of regions and the UN in both Chapter VIII and non-chapter VIII activities, and perform functions in support of disarmament and mediation. This claim was reaffirmed in both during, and in the wake of, the 2015 High-Level report on peacekeeping (HIPPO, 2015), which explicitly called for the UN to develop stronger partnerships in Peacekeeping between the UN and regional structures in order to develop more responsive and effective operations (Peter, 2019:1). As the report states: "A bold new agenda is required to build a strong global-regional framework to meet these challenges through responsible and principled strategic partnerships." (HIPPO, 2015: para.53, 13; see also Thakur and Langenhove, 2006:235) Indeed, an increasing number of academics have noted that "States from the global South are not mere recipients or implementers of international interventions anymore but are increasingly vocal about how these should take shape." (Peter, 2019:3).

However, there is still an urgent need to understand how regions cooperate with the UN in peacekeeping? Does the form of a region affect the nature and fruits of cooperation? Can global south regional-UN partnerships grant the ability to shape peacekeeping operations giving agency to the 'global south' as partners rather than mere contributors (Cunliffe, 2013:20 and 95-97; also Peter, 2019). These three questions indicate a broader issue with discussing regions in UN peacekeeping operations. They are both: functional and collaborative, and normative (Williams, 2017:124).

In the context of this special issue, this paper interrogates the linkages between functional contributions, the development of UN-regional dialogues, and the ability of the ASEAN region to inform how peacekeeping operations are shaped. As such, it takes and adapts Mitrany's functionalist approach exploring different mechanisms for how linkages between the UN and the region are developed and what type of activity produces different variations in cooperation. **In short can functional cooperation lead to normative outcomes in determining how regions cooperate in peacekeeping missions?** In particular, exploring whether and how technical and functional competence is a driving force for developing partnerships and cooperation which can then lead to ideas or normative partnership.

This is needed because all too often the 'global south' in terms of peacekeeping partners is seen as synonymous to the 54 African states and their collective regional fora: ECOWAS and the African Union (AU).

This equivalence is understandable and justifiable as considered as a regional group Africa's 54 states collectively contribute significantly to UN peacekeeping (UN Data, 2019; De Coning and Peter, 2018), and the AU has an institutionalised and formalised structure for coordinated action (Williams and Boutellis, 2014). Furthermore, these studies help to demonstrate a move away from a segregation between North and South regarding the roles and responsibilities of states towards peacekeeping operations. However, it should be noted that the highest numbers of peacekeepers from individual states still come from India, Bangladesh and Pakistan and that the number coming from individual African states fit the same range as those from Southeast Asia. Similarly, a further limitation of a focus on Africa is that it unhelpfully overlooks the diversity of engagement and the unique contributions of other regions with less formalised structures, whose contributions are deployed outside their home region, and therefore obscures some forms of state agency. Or even smaller regions comprised of fewer states.

This article contributes to filling this lacuna by focusing on the contribution of the Asia-Pacific and more specifically the ASEAN states to the development of an UN-Regional partnership in peacekeeping.[1] In exploring this area, it demonstrates that, in line with debates on regionalism more generally, ASEAN is seen to be an 'incomplete' or 'unrecognised' region (Ong, 2012), because of its form of soft regionalism and the difficulty the UN has in developing a working partnership structure. Does this mean that ASEAN is not and cannot be a partner in UN peacekeeping? And what does this mean for the transfer of knowledge and expertise from troop contributing states into the UN structures?

The paper argues that that if ASEAN will eventually become a UN partner in peacekeeping this will necessitate a two-pronged approach to engagement by the UN: functional coordination and ideational spill overs (according to Mitrany's functionalist theory), that advance at the speed and rhythm of the region. At the same time, the UN bureaucracy will need to consider in earnest how it engages with troop contributing states and utilises the information derived from engagement. However, what appears more likely is that increasing effective functional co-existent processes (Cook, this issue) with the UN will emerge with the region in the areas to address conflict, humanitarian and disaster experiences. Enhanced cooperation will develop in

the provision of troop and in training of UN peacekeepers in the region to be deployed externally. But, the limiting factor to developing partnerships will be the divergence in strategic goals in what peacekeeping should and can achieve. In this respect there appears to be more prospects for partnership between troop contributors and the host state in these operation (as in the case of Cambodia and East Timor).

Before continuing a note on terminology. This paper looks at international institutions, organisations and regimes. In using these terms it seeks to do so precisely, as a result, this papers uses the distinction of Martin and Simmons that "scholars have come to regard "international institutions" as sets of rules meant to govern international behavior." (2002:328) In contrast, the term organisation is used to denote an existing entity (including the UN, ASEAN and the EU).

This paper proceeds in four parts. First, it outlines why regions are increasingly important in peacekeeping missions and how they are understood to contribute to legitimacy and effectiveness. Second, it explores the functions of regions in knowledge transfer. Third, it outlines why it is important to consider ASEAN in peacekeeping operations and how we should understand the relationship between these states and the UN. . Finally, it concludes with a claim that the potential to develop a partnership between ASEAN and the UN is necessarily different from the partnerships with the other regions but there is much to be gained from generating a more extensive relationship particularly as the UN moves towards more people centred peacekeeping. However, there is a great deal of potential in considering the relationship between host states and ASEAN troop contributing countries and the potential emergence of 'the ASEAN way in peacekeeping.'

Peacekeeping and Regional Organisations

UN peacekeeping faces numerous challenges including budgetary constraints, appropriate resources and troop contributions, necessary linguistic and other skills among the pool of deployable peacekeepers, challenges to the legitimacy of operations, and the ability to generate or facilitate a lasting or positive peace. All of these challenges have been discussed at length within the UN headquarters and in dialogues around the world, and among the factors identified as having the potential to mitigate or even mollify some or all of these challenges has been to place greater emphasis on regions as the practitioners in peacekeeping operations.

As noted above, the UN has identified that, in some conflicts, the involvement of 'home' regions or contiguous regions are important for the legitimacy of UN peacekeeping operations

(Williams, 2017:127). Regions diminish the view that 'external' forces are imposing solutions on a group or state (Dobson, 1999). It is also stated that in order to create or facilitate a lasting peace, local actors must be participants in the peace process as a result, given the potential for greater similarities of language, culture, identity and religion, a preference for regional ownership of peacekeeping operations has emerged (Williams, 2017:127). This preference is replete with assumptions, many of which have been interrogated in other works, however, the biggest question rests on the agency of the regional organisation and its composite states in the provision and shaping of a peace operation. The assumption in these arguments or a potential determinant as to whether a regional peace operation produces these results is the degree to which the regional actor or actors can inform the objectives, functions and processes of the operation and at what level they can do this. Is the regional organisation a provider of resources and a cloak of legitimacy or can these bodies provide input into the type and form of operations?

According to many evaluations there has been a perpetual claim that the UN clearly identifies the need to engage more locally by it is woefully inadequate and its approaches are insufficient in meaningfully engaging these actors (see: Whalen 2017: 307; UN 2015; Sabbrow, 2017:160). Furthermore, as UN operations have evolved there is a greater need to engage with local populations in order to be more effective by being seen as being more legitimate. In promoting engagement with local populations peacekeepers are increasingly involved in activities including: preventing conflict, promoting human rights, empowering women, protecting civilians and building the rule of law (UN, 2019). In the achievement of these goals, N peacekeepers have been increasingly involved with activities that cross over with those included in providing disaster relief and humanitarian assistance. For example, peacekeepers provided medical assistance during the Ebola crisis (Davies and Rushton, 2016), provide water supplies and host state rebuilding and the provision of food and other life sustaining assistance.

As a result, there are two processes or logics that are important here. First, the involvement of regional organisations in peace operation can increase the legitimacy of those operations by being seen by the host population as 'insiders' (Sabrow, 2017:166) and having a "cultural similarities, a shared history" (Sabrow, 2017:166). Second, the peacekeepers ability to engage with the local society or host population will be through the provision of activities also associated with HADR. These two elements should be mutually reinforcing as the closer cultural links to the host population should also ensure that peacekeeper activities are more efficient and effective. At this level, the functional activities on the ground are key determinants of success.

However, a potential problem with the argument that "each region of the world 'should be responsible for its own peacemaking and peacekeeping'" (Goulding cited in Williams, 2017:124) is that the factors which are at the heart of this argument are ideational rather than geographical – local engagement is facilitated by cultural, linguistic, and historical affinities rather than geographic proximity. Indeed, geographic proximity can negate the positive effects of ideational factors because of tensions between regional states.

The argument herein is that the positive effects of these ideational factors are not solely benefits of engagements through proximate regional organisations but can be derived through the deployment of troops from other regions. For example, Indonesian peacekeepers in the Lebanon with a common religion were cited as being highly successful in engaging with the local population. Indeed, through music and dance Indonesian peacekeepers were highly effective within the operation (Author Interview, with Andy Rachmianto, August 2016). In addition, in their statement to the UN in May 2019, Indonesia highlighted the importance of culturally sensitive peacekeeping deployments and the essential contribution of female peacekeepers (Indonesian Statement to the UN, 2019) Indeed, as non-regionally defined research outputs that focus on mission diversity have indicated there is a crucial balance between having peacekeepers with varied expertise, skills and cultures, and the coordination problems that such diversity presents (Bove and Ruggeri, 2016: 683). As a result, although the UN and other evaluations of peacekeeping missions have sought to focus on the importance of regions, this may be a proxy for two other processes. First, that regions through coordinated activity within the region in a variety of engagements (not least in providing HA and DR), smooth out coordination problems of diverse groups developing systems and standard practices. Second, regions being proximate to the host state, may be obscuring that the significance or the crucial element is in the cultural and other affinities, which may be more likely but not uniquely provided by nearby states.

A functional approach to knowledge transfer from regional organisations

The introduction of this issue highlighted that there is great confusion about what the terms partnership, coexistence, cooperation, and coordination mean and whether and how they can be distinguished from each other. In addition, the introduction adopted an approach based on Mitrany's functionalism (1966) and Haas's (1968) neofunctionalism to explore whether lessons learnt through implementation and responses in the case of both peacekeeping and HA and DR activities, have 'spill-over' effects into policy level debates. In the words of Mitrany:

"In all countries social activities … are organized and reorganised continually … But because of the legalistic structure of the state and our political outlook, which treat national and international society as two different worlds, […] Our social activities are cut off arbitrarily at the limit of the state and, if at all, are allowed to be linked to the same activities across the border only by means of uncertain and cramping political ligatures. What is proposed here is simply that these political amputations should cease." (1966:81-82).

What Mitrany was proposing then was that cooperation in some aspect of social life, should have spill-overs into other arenas. This concept was taken up notably by Haas, Keohane (1988;1989) and Kratochwil (1984) and later has seeds in the international practices literature (see for example Adler-Nissan and Pouliot, 2014; Adler and Pouliot, 2011; Pouliot and Cornut, 2015). Throughout these arguments is a logic that frequent day-to-day cooperation between actors produces patterns of behaviour, these patterns inform how rules are understood and interpreted and in themselves form a part of how change in international relations emerges (Jones, 2019). In this argument, there are two essential elements: first, that dialogue is an essential component of the development of common practice; second that the actors commonly interacting are the same. This logic is then echoed in the paper by Cook, it is illustrated that in this transfer or movement from co-existing and communicating with other actors in responding to disasters towards more cooperative endeavours and burden sharing approaches, the essential driving factor is in developing functional coordination between different actors.

At this stage then it is also important to set out how it is possible for coexistence, cooperation and coordinated functional activities to be translated into partnership type exchanges. In doing this, it is important to consider the concept of agency alongside the arguments of Mitrany et al. Agency, which is implicit within the term and concept of partnership, emerges from various IR debates on state's contributions to global governance and the development of niche expertise (Jones, 2018; Cooper, 1997) , and is frequently assumed to be increasing among global south states, indeed agency is a central distinguishing element in understanding the difference between coordinating actors and partners.

Agency matters in partnerships because of the distinction between partners and coordination, as being the importance of common visions and strategic goals as well as the assumption of equality between actors. Under the concept of partners both entities should be able to contribute to the development of a common strategic vision as well as functionally contribute to its

achievement. As a result, partners should be actively engaged with processes of uploading and downloading of information and best practices between each other, there should also be the emergence of a relationship resembling interregional between partners and in the case of the relationship between ASEAN and the UN, there should also be evidence of the regional export of ideas to the international level. In this context, there should be an abundance of dialogues and meetings at all levels of the subject or area of partnership – including summit meetings, technical meetings, track 1.5 and track 2 meetings – those attending these meetings should be the same personnel for each level and topic.

Who are the potential partners for UN peacekeeping?

In this paper there are a multitude of different actors to consider as being involved in the potential partnership between the UN and ASEAN. On the UN side these include, the UN member states, the two relevant branches of the UN secretariat (the Department of Peace operations DPO and the Department for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs DPPA), the Security Council, the committees (including the special committee on peacekeeping- C34), the general assembly (particularly the fourth committee) the regional UN offices in Bangkok, and the in-capital formations, as well as a the civil mission leadership (the head of mission) and the UN mission commander. Throughout this paper the focus is on the relationship between the UN secretariat (the DPPA and DPO) and the links to the events and actions in the Security Council and the general assembly fourth committee. At each usage the specific entity within the UN is identified and where the term UN is used without specification it is intended to denote the whole organisation.

Similarly, in exploring the engagement of ASEAN there are many different avenues of engagement including the ASEAN secretariat, the ASEAN defence ministers meeting, the political and security pillar and its secretary general, in addition to separating out the individual ASEAN states, and the adjunct bodies including the ASEAN regional forum and ASEAN plus three. In this paper the distinction is that ASEAN is denoted of actions from the secretariat as decided through consensus of the ASEAN 10 member states and decisions of the ASEAN 10 members as a collective grouping. Whereas there are profound reasons for discussion the ASEAN regional forum as a peacekeeping contributor, this has previously been done by Ralf Emmers (2004).

Why look at ASEAN and partnerships in peacekeeping?

It is frequently noted that the states of ASEAN have not experienced inter-state conflict between members since 1967. Raising serious questions as to why the region should be investigated in relation to potentially becoming a UN peacekeeping partner as it is not a destination for peacekeeping deployments since Cambodia and East Timor. However, as noted by Helmke (2009:4), the region has been subject to serious unrest, internal armed conflict, and humanitarian crises that have been the result of both climate-induced and politically induced disasters. Despite this prevalence of conflicts, the region has only experienced the presence f peacekeepers in relation to two states: Cambodia (in the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia) and East Timor (in INTERFET and UNTAET). However, in addition to these multilateral peacekeeping operations, the region is replete with examples of responses to conflicts and disasters that (as noted in the introduction of this issue) encompasses many similar activities and personnel. As a result, despite the absence of UNPKOs the region does have a store of lessons learnt and potential to share knowledge to a wider global community.

According to the UN, partnerships have the intention of achieving three goals: increasing the legitimacy of UN Peacekeeping operations (UNPKOs); enhancing capacity and efficacy of those operations (UN Document, S/2015/229: paras 34-43); and embedding local ownership of peace and its maintenance within communities, ensuring a people-centred approach (UN Documents, S/2015/229: paras 50-55; HIPPO, 2015). According to the academic debates (as noted in the introduction) these actions should go beyond mere coordinated activities or cooperative ad-hoc arrangements; instead they should be based on equality between actors, a strategic objective, long-term engagements, and seek to achieve the same goals and hold the same values (Authors, this issue; Mohr and Spekman, 1994; Lasker, Weiss and Miller, 2001; Yamashita, 2012).

In looking at the current UN partners, the focus has been on engagement with the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU). These two regional groupings have been the top two recipient regions of UN operations, and one of the main funders. These two regions have therefore rightly warranted the greater attention given to them as peacekeeping partners and contributors.

In addition, these regional bodies have formal codified structures for the UN to engage with, both have shared common values and approaches in line with the UN objectives making strategic and enduring partnerships possible. Yet these two organisations are not the only potential or emerging partners of the UN in peacekeeping. According to the Department of

Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), they have partnerships emerging with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Organisation for Security Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Shanghai Cooperation Organisations (SCO), Pacific Island Forum (PIF) and the South African Development Community (SADC). According to the DPPAs summary of its relationship with ASEAN: "The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is emerging as an indispensable global partner and role model - it has a vital and growing role to play in ensuring peace and stability in the Asian region and beyond." (DPPA, 2019). Furthermore, as this special issue explores, there is a wealth of experiences and lessons to be learnt from the variety of conflicts and disasters that the region has taken the lead in addressing.

As a result, ASEAN is (or should be) emerging as an indispensable global partner. However, there remain important obstacles that need to be acknowledged in order to be overcome. In setting out these challenges it is therefore important to understand how cooperation happens, how knowledge travels within and between the relevant actors, and where there are barriers to further functional practices that could lead to partnership. This section therefore starts by exploring the history of ASEAN with peacekeeping and how its contributions (both as a collective and as individual states) has increased.

ASEAN and Peacekeeping: from cooperation to coordination

From the introduction of this issue, in combination with the paper from Cook, in order to move towards partnership, it is first necessary to demonstrate that states have moved from co-existing towards cooperation, by increasingly developing coordinated practices in the same types of operation. This section presents why it is possible to see the relations between ASEAN troop contributing states as being firmly grounded in cooperative and highlight coordinated activities.

Southeast Asian states are important contributors to UN peace operations, not only through the provision of troops but also in providing niche expertise and technical support to operations and increasingly by providing locations for training. Although, in total volume the region's contributions to UN operations has been between 3 and 5 percent since the 2000s within those contributions there are some notably high points. For example, Indonesia's contributions have doubled in the 10 years from 2008 to 2018, and Cambodia's have almost quadrupled (see data from UN Data 2008 and 2018 – full table is available as an appendix). Moreover, Indonesia has made a commitment to training and sending more female peacekeepers (Interview, Jakarta, August, 2016) – even though the actual numbers sent so far have fallen behind their aspirations. Moreover, some states in the region are already being perceived as a 'provider of a niche

capability', for instance, Cambodia for mine clearing,[2] Thailand for water purification/ground water drilling,[3] or Vietnam for medical services[4]. In addition, in 2018, ASEAN training centres became the location of UN peacekeeping training, when the department of field support inspected, approved and authorised four regional centres: Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia and Thailand (Salikha, 2018). This use came only four years after Vietnam sent its first peacekeepers in 2014. Since then Vietnam's contributions have increased from 2 in 2014 to 73 in 2018 (UN Data, 2014 and 2018). Through this specialisation of expertise within the region, ASEAN has developed a peacekeeping network (ADMM, 2009; Capie, 2015:111). As a result, although not the largest contributor to UN operations, ASEAN states have targeted their contributions to transfer their own knowledge and expertise through the UN system in an efficient way and avoid duplication of resources or expertise. As a result, they have coordinated internally and avoided regional peer competition.

Furthermore, in addition to contributing troops the states in the region have also discussed the development of their regional identity in peacekeeping operations. For example, the concept of an ASEAN peacekeeping force has been floated three times, first in 1994, when it was rejected on the grounds that it would violate the region's norm of non-interference (Bernard, 2016), second it was proposed in 2003 by Indonesia – although it was robustly opposed by other regional states. Third, in 2015, it was proposed by Malaysia and appeared to gain greater regional traction (Parameswaran, 2015). Behind these larger concept-based pushes for a regional peacekeeping force, is the regionally shared belief that contributing to peacekeeping operation will enhance the status of individual states, enable them to develop expertise, (von Einsiedel and Yasaki, 2016) and that potentially the status and recognition of the region might be enhanced.

Despite this enthusiasm for peacekeeping with Southeast Asia, developments towards making the region a UN partner have been glacial. According to the framework for this issue, progress towards this seems to be trapped at the intersection of the functional cooperation producing common values and goals driven partnership. It is notable that in the most recent secretariat to secretariat meeting between ASEAN and the UN in Jakarta, and the departments of Political Affairs and the DPPA both being in attendance the statement produced made no reference to peacekeeping as a common endeavour (ASEAN, 2019). However, this may oversimplify the reality and misconstrue the importance of the presence the DPO and the DPPA at the meeting. As is often the case with ASEAN (although not with the UN) more productive exchanges happen in side-meetings in track 1.5 and track 2 dialogues. As a result, it is insufficient to take

only the published output statements as evidence of a lack of movement towards ASEAN more fully becoming a UN partner.

In the area of peacekeeping, as this is conducted under the leadership of UN standard operating procedures, and troops are under the command of a UN appointed commander (although there are limits to the types of activities that this individual can require troops to conduct and has to refer disciplinary matters to the sender state) there is ample evidence to demonstrate that there are opportunities for the development of coordinated and cooperative practices to emerge among the Southeast Asian states, however, within a program where this is competitively limited. In taking the case of the development of peacekeeping training centres, the states have developed a cooperative practice that enables individual state expertise, rather than bringing the states in practice engagement in those expertise areas. As a result, they have competitively coordinated their cooperation. One plausible explanation for this is a lack of trust between the states and the ability to 'export' the issue.

How do Southeast Asian States understand or approach Peacekeeping?

It is clear that ASEAN is not a UN partner that will provide hybrid peacekeeping operations with the UN, so in what sense can it become a partner? In drawing on the framework in the introduction and the adaptation early in this paper, this section focuses on the ability for ASEAN collectively or ASEAN member states to develop 'aligned strategic goals' and develop common policies and practices that draw on the functional and technical expertise of the region in combination with the UN. In short, we are looking for a gradual movement of UN policies and practices to explicitly draw on expertise from within the region and the emergence of a relative peer to peer partnership.

How can we feasibly identify whether there has been a knowledge or an expertise transfer and the emergence of a partnership between the UN and ASEAN or the ASEAN member states? As noted in the literature on ASEAN in the introduction, this region presents numerous research challenges – in particular in identifying specific outcomes from an identified causal mechanism – it is deliberately difficult to pinpoint which state drove forwards which action or activity.

The approach adopted here is first to identify where there is a distinctive characteristic of Southeast Asian states in relation to peacekeeping, then identify the points of expression or championing of that approach within the UN organisational structures, and then to look at the outcome.

According to the national plans and approaches to peacekeeping operations, Southeast Asian states (in concert with China and Japan) advocate of the use of traditional peacekeeping forces. That is, they seek minimal use of force, the consent of the host government, and impartiality in the political dispute, within an overall framework where there is a combined political goal that such an operation can achieve. In exploring the contributions that the states of Southeast Asian have made in peacekeeping operations their contributions have largely sought to contribute troops that align with operations that fall within these parameters and reflect their own domestic and regional expertise in conflict management and mitigation. This preference for peacekeeping is the result of a number of influences, first, the region's experience of receiving UN peacekeeping forces in Cambodia and East Timor, second, through their engagement in domestic affairs for example in the case of Thailand, third, in regional engagement in Mindanao by Malaysia, and third because of their preference for non-interference and the respect of state soveriengty (Emmers, 2004: 144)

A key element of the approach of the region to peacekeeping operations is the ability to straddle the civil-military divide and to engage with the local population. In Cambodia, Indonesian forces were deployed in order to support the tenuous peace that had been achieved. Although, this operation was 'traditional' in its formulation, the Indonesian Peacekeepers engagement with the local populations (explicitly not taking sides in the conflict) was seen as integral to the success of the mission.[5] In learning lessons from this operation the current training given to Indonesian troops preparing to be deployed in UN peacekeeping operations focuses on the importance of Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and the nature and limits of the relationship of the UN forces to the host society. Indeed, as noted in an Interview in Jakarta in 2016, one of the essential and remarkable aspects of Indonesia's peacekeeping success – particularly in Islamic states or in states where Islam is the dominant religion – is the ability of the peacekeeper to engage with the local population through common cultures, developing good relationships based on trust with the host society.[6] This argument was also highlighted in Malaysia's deployments in Bosnia (Cook, 2014:167) and is seen as a key attribute of Thai peacekeepers to engage with the local population in the areas of health, agriculture, and management (Kraisoraphong and Howe, 2014:250). Indeed, in evaluations of peacekeeping as outlined above, and in the aim of this special issue collection, the ability of peacekeepers to draw on lessons from HA and DR experiences feeds into the ability for peacekeepers to positively contribute to the trust between the local and host population and the objectives of the mission (Korson, 2015; Sabrow, 2016)

As a result, it is clear that the states in ASEAN have begun to explicitly develop remarkable technical and humanitarian skills through their regional engagement in delivering Humanitarian and Disaster relief (see Cook, this issue), and through their involvement with Peacekeeping operations in delivering the protection of civilians' agenda and the humanitarian face of peacekeeping. However, in order for these methods of peacekeeping to be effective they must be undertaken in the context of a traditional peacekeeping operation that conforms to consent, minimal force, and impartiality.

In examining the connection between these two key aspects of Southeast Asian approaches, Lina Alexandra sets out that in the case of Indonesia, "it emphasizes persuasion to encourage host countries to think of ways to create peace in their respective countries, **particularly through intensive dialogues with local stakeholders**. Rather than taking place solely at the formal level, **such dialogues have often been conducted on an informal basis to engage non-state actors, such as think-tanks and non-governmental organizations."** Therefore, it is not solely that peacekeeping needs to develop a 'humanitarian face' and engage more extensively with local populations, but that the whole population (elites, businesses, local government, and populations) need to be involved in the drive towards peace. This aim of peace must not be imposed but rather common goals between the host state and the intervention force must be developed initially through dialogue and debate to set out the mission parameters, but subsequently all peacekeeping actions must be accompanied by dialogue.

Although it is argued by von Einsiedel and Yasaki (2016:11) that although the states in Southeast Asia advocate and are strongly attached to traditional peacekeeping, this may also be a result of their limited ability to contribute to more robust types of operation. Even with moves towards developing regional capacity to contribute to more robust operations, the expertise of Southeast Asian states remains in their ability to "highlight the role of their peacekeepers as early peace-builders who engage in activities aimed at fostering development and societal cohesion." (von Einsiedel and Yaskai, 2016:11).

'The ASEAN way in peacekeeping' therefore highlights the importance of track 2 and track1.5 dialogues, not imposing an externally devised pre-formulated political outcome. From looking at Indonesia's approach to UN level engagements it is true that this approach is not only followed in peacekeeping operations but also in how to engage with other states in developing peacekeeping policy. In Indonesia's contribution to UN Security Council discussions – for example in the mandate discussion on MONUSCO, to which Indonesia contributes over 1000

troops and therefore has direct insights to draw on – its comments to the Council focused on ensuring that all peacekeepers and the operation overall had sufficient resources to accomplish their tasks, rather than making policy prescriptions for the mission overall.[7]

In the debates within the fourth committee in November 2017, Indonesia (speaking on behalf of ASEAN) spoke to argue for caution in respect to the reforms to the UN secretariat and the move away from the department of peacekeeping operations to the department of peace operations, because it saw this as a conceptual move from the traditional tenants of peacekeeping towards more robust operations that would shrink the importance of human engagement and dialogue.[8] This is then in harmony with the conclusion of Von Einseidel and Yaskai (2014:11) that Southeast Asia may be most successfully engaged in supporting special political mission within the peacekeeping framework, and Caberlero-Anthony and Heywood (2010) have also noted this shift in ASEAN's approach within the peacekeeping community at both the international and regional levels "from the mere functional to the normative." (2010:7).

In the same 4th Committee suite of debates in October and November 2017, Malaysia advocated that within increasingly complex missions there was a need for active contribution of host countries, and that it was essential to win the hearts and minds of local populations. Similarly, Vietnam highlighted that political solutions should be at the heart of peacekeeping operations. This ASEAN approach is therefore centred on the emergence of 'partnership', and despite the emergence of greater focus on UN-ASEAN summits perhaps the most important partnership for ASEAN to build is between the peacekeepers and the host state and population, rather than among the contributing states and the UN. Importantly, in considering the wider East Asian region and their contribution to peacekeeping operations this contrasts with the contributions of Japan, who adopts a similar approach but for different normative reasons (see, Mulloy, this issue).

What is the result of ASEAN's expertise in relation to its agency or partnership with the UN?

In exploring the development of partnerships as distinct from cooperative practices, the introduction of this issue makes the distinction that partnerships adopt the definition that:

> "A **purpose driven and strategic relationship** between independent entities or groupings in a **non-hierarchical relationship**, which has mutual and individual benefits for each partner. They must be between entities that are themselves able to commit to the undertaking over a **long period of time, encompassing a range of specific activities**, but are more than the sum of those activities. Partnerships require the development of mutual

expectations each should have of the other and has a basis of **trust.**" (Introduction, this issue, emphasis added)

These contributions and the emergence of common strategic goals and the development of recognised expertise should confirm the expectations and claims of Peter et al (2018), that the voices of the global south – even beyond that of the AU – are increasingly being heard. Moving beyond that, in terms of becoming an effective partner there should be an expectation that these voices are increasingly affecting the approaches adopted by the UN developed between peers and based on trust.

In looking at the academic literature on the agency of small and medium powers, it is claimed that by developing niche expertise, states can enhance their agency. As a result, in order to develop a partnership between a region or state and the UN in the area of peacekeeping, it would be expected that the region or state partner would develop niche or specific expertise (specific activities in the context of a wider strategic objective). This development of expertise allows the region or state access to the fora to contribute, their experience and knowledge provides them with legitimacy and authority and by creating bridges and links between like-minded states (such as the ASEAN network) they should reap dividends of collective action. As a result, enabling these states to have a seat at the table reduces the hierarchy between the UN and the contributor, in addition demonstrated consistent expertise is a ground for developing trust. This then presents a claim to be investigated: does the presence of the voices from the global south, in combination with their enhanced experiences and expertise, produce enhanced agency in the niche area of peacekeeping operations which may led to partnerships?

Peter's argument can be read to imply that the answer should be 'yes', as being more vocal has an effect on shaping peacekeeping operations. Yet within the same collection of papers Abdenur claims that despite the enhanced contributions of the global south "These states have little voice in the formulation and adoption of peacekeeping mandates." (2018:51) he goes on to note that among the things that these states are being more vocal about is the need not only for their voices to be heard but for effective conceptual and normative level changes to take place as a result of them (Abdenur, 2018:52). Claims of this nature, indicate that contributing states are speaking but the mandate crafting states aren't listening; a refrain that has become common across all fora within the UN.[9] In the framework of this issue, this would mean that contributors from the global south (and from Southeast Asia in particular) are cooperate and coordinate but are not involved in the development of a common strategic vision.

Hence in seeking to consider the prospect of partnership, ASEAN collectively and the ASEAN states fall short. ASEAN is not engaged with through the office of the DPO and DPPA in similar ways as the AU or EU (because it doesn't contribute to hybrid missions), even though all three regional organisations issue joint states within UN debates. . Moreover, their collective and shared preference for impartial, non-coercive missions, that respect state sovereignty, is increasingly at odds with the approaches adopted by the UN at the conceptual and ideas level – despite the harmony of these approaches at the 2nd order or implementation level. Hence, we seek strategic level divergence between the approaches of the UN and ASEAN states. This presents some nuance to the terms to be used, when it is considered whether ASEAN can be a partner of the UN or whether ASEAN states can bilaterally become partners, at the functional level the argument is clearly yes.

In looking in detail at the nature and content of the UN-ASEAN partnership the focus has been on preventative diplomacy, sustaining peace and conflict prevention including combating organised and cyber-, crime, 'promoting dialogue' and 'exploring further', rather than drawing substantive lessons from the experience of their ASEAN partner in achieving the successful transfer of knowledge from humanitarian and disaster relief activities, or in developing the region's experience and contributions to peacekeeping missions (see: DPPA, 2019; Chairman's Statement of the 9th UN-ASEAN Summit, 2017; UN-ASEAN Comprehensive Partnership, 2016).

For example, the statement on the comprehensive joint partnership between the UN and ASEAN states that both parties will:

> *"1.1.4 **Explore further cooperation** with the UN to provide continued training assistance in peacekeeping to ASEAN,[…];*
>
> *1.1.5. **Promote regional dialogues**, […];*
>
> *1.1.6. **Promote collaboration** between the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC) and the UN, […];"*
>
> *(UN-ASEAN Comprehensive Partnership, 2016 – emphasis added)*

To a degree these objectives have been achieved, the UN and ASEAN regional training centres became training partners for UN peacekeepers in 2018 with the first set of arranged UN trainings in the region (Jones and Amouroux, under review; Salikha, 2018). The creation of a 1.5 track dialogue is also indicative of the emergence of a consistent effort to bring together

the lessons from ASEAN. However, despite being termed 'partnerships' these documents and subsequent 1.5 track activities and meetings suggest that the nature of the relationship is more about functional coordination and cooperation rather than a strategic partnership of equals.

In exploring the argument of this paper, and in considering the claims that voices from Global South troop contributing states are being heard in the evolution of peacekeeping operations, the question should be more pressing as to what the presence of these voices actually contributes to the shaping of operations. Whilst, we have the emergence of enhanced cooperation at the technical and implementation level the lacuna in our understanding is whether this transfers to being able to inform and shape mandates and the overarching objectives of peacekeeping operations.

For example, under Secretary General (SG) Antonio Guterres, the UN have reformed its central structures (which came into effect in January 2019). These changes saw the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Peacebuilding Support Office, reconfigured into a Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) and a Department of Peace Operations (DPO) (UN Document, A/72/525, 13 October 2017, sec.III). These proposals and discussions of these changes were presented in this document as reforms necessary to make the organisation more 'nimble' and effective. However, in the discussion in the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly in October 2017 (Participant observation, fourth Committee, October 2017, UNHQ New York), these were seen as an attempt to force a change upon member states away from 'peacekeeping operations,' which are consent-driven, non-coercive actions, towards 'peace operations' enabling more coercive actions and extensive, intrusive operations into sovereign states. In this case, the arguing nature and overall strategic objectives of the organisation happened behind the scenes in the UN in a place where few academics have access. The proposals themselves were presented as being part of the development of the institution, yet they actually re-interpret the norms guiding the institution and would potentially codify them making them more difficult to change. Why is this shift significant? It is further evidence of the disparity between the global north agenda setting states and the troop contributing states. But, as will be discussed below, it also sets out the differences between the TCCs.

As a result, we have the emergence of a tentative nuance to the argument at this juncture, that ASEAN has become (or is becoming) a functional cooperating entity with the UN regarding peacekeeping, however, that functional relationship needs to be more expansive and developed

in order to more effectively draw on the lessons housed within the region. However, at the level of ideas and concepts, despite the advocacy for this, these states continue to be marginalised. This 'out-of-step with ideas' focus also should cause a pause for considering whether the 'global south' is a conceptually useful term and whether it is appropriate to consider 'the voice of troop contributing countries from the global south', as a homogenous grouping.

Conclusion: Does this mean ASEAN or the ASEAN states aren't or can't be Partners in Peacekeeping?

One of the conclusions of the UNISOM in Somalia was "It is essential to have an integrated mission plan covering political, humanitarian and military aspects, each dovetailed into a complementing each other." (Jett, 2001:54). Although these lessons were identified they were never learnt, much less enacted. In looking at the example of ASEAN and the individual ASEAN states as potential partners in peacekeeping this seems to affirm this view. Although, ASEAN and its component states are emerging as a potential partners its ability to determine and contribute to a joint strategic vision is limited to its own activities within its own region and tends to focus on coordination rather than partnership. ASEAN's own approach to regional engagement means that ASEAN's relationship with the UN needs to be fundamentally different from that of the EU or the AU.

As noted in the introduction of this issue, trust is an important facilitator or impeding factor for developing partnerships. Within ASEAN the level of trust between states – particularly on issues of security – remains low. One mechanism for increasing this level of trust or enhancing coordination is by exporting some leadership and financial issues to an external body (Jones, 2015). In the case of peacekeeping the UN can play a role generating trust between ASEAN states; enabling them to specialise without directly competing with each other, enhance the regional profile and potentially their collective global agency.

However, the more significant trust dynamic demonstrated in this paper is between regional organisations and the host population. As noted above, one of the central contributions of regional organisations in peacekeeping is through their ability to garner greater legitimacy for the operation within the host society, rather than in building trust within the regional organisation and its own members (which may be a side-effect) or even in building a mor enduring partnership between the regional organisation and the UN. In this sense, the 'ASEAN way in peacekeeping' appears to champion first and foremost a more effective mechanism for generating legitimacy and trust in peacekeeping operations, that rather than export the

provision of legitimacy to being provided by the region, instead critically interrogates what the actual root causes are for increasing or decreasing trust and legitimacy of peacekeepers – which is in line with the conclusions of more recent scholarship.

Hence this paper has attempted to problematise: Who is a partnership in peacekeeping between? At the level of UN and region the relationship between ASEAN and the UN demonstrates clear cooperation rather than partnership. This is because of two essential aspects: First, training provisions are from peacekeeper to peacekeeper rather than at the conceptual or policy level to the Department of Peace Operations. As a result, it may be more accurate to consider them inter-regional or even inter-state knowledge transfers rather than evidence of region-international transfers. Second, the pattern of cooperation in the region is not in the pursuit of a strategic region-wide vision, but rather a means for the prestige and engagement of each individual state to be enhanced. As a result, it is evidence of inter-state cooperation rather than regional-UN partnership.

Returning the question of this paper, does this mean that ASEAN cannot be a partner of the UN in peacekeeping? The argument set out here is that under the terms and understanding of partnership of the UN and as we currently understand how regions can act as agents the answer is that it cannot be a partner. However, as this paper has demonstrated, there is evidence that the voice of ASEAN is at times being heard within the UN and there are valuable lessons to be garnered from this region. In consequence there is a need to consider what conditions of engagement need to be changed in order to more effectively transfer lessons and diversify UN partners. However, a surprising conclusion is that there is evidence that the place we should look for partnerships is between troops contributed, troop contributing states and the host states in peacekeeping operations.

This paper started by mapping out that regions are important for peacekeeping missions to try to develop greater legitimacy and connection to the local population and thereby be more 'successful'. From the 'ASEAN Way in Peacekeeping' the use of dialogue rather than coercion, the local engagement, the consensus approach, may enable peacekeeping to respond more successfully – if more gradually – to the challenges missions face in terms of legitimacy and efficacy.

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[1] It should be noted that previous works exploring the contributions of Asia-pacific States has been undertaken, but not through the lens of exploring partnerships. See for example: Aoi and Heng, 2014; Cunliffe, 2013.

[2] The ASEAN PSC Blueprint 2025 notably encourages the 'dissemination of best practices' by the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre in Cambodia across the region. However an emerging problem is that a number of experts are now retiring and the knowledge and expertise is not being passed on to the next generation – we thank Alistair Cook for this point.

[3] One of Thailand's pledges at the 2017 UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial conference on peacekeeping held in Vancouver: http://www.providingforpeacekeeping.org/capabilities-summits/united-nations-peacekeeping-pledge-counter/ last accessed 5 March 2019.

[4] Vietnam dispatched in November 2018 its first ever Level-2 field hospital to a UN peacekeeping mission; see https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/historic-arrival-vietnam-and-united-nations last accessed 5 March 2019.

[5] I thank Lina Alexandra and Fitriani Bintang for this point.

[6] Author interview, Jakarta, August 2016.
[7] Participant Observation, UN Security Council, 18 March 2019.

[8] Participant Observation, UN Fourth Committee, November 2017.

[9] For example, in the 4th Committee meeting in November 2017, one state called for the Secretariat to listen to the comments and contributions of the C34 committee. In July-August in 2015, Malaysia, New Zealand and Nigeria all sought to focus on the importance of changing the working methods of the UN Security Councils so that elected members had sight of mandates further ahead of voting on them. Participant observation UNSC, August, 2015; Participant Observation, 4th Committee, October-November 2017; Jones, 2015; Jones, 2018.