

Lessons Learned from Jakarta Informal Meeting to Solve Conflicts in Myanmar


Wednesday, 28 April 2021 WIB, By: Natasa Adelayanti



Dr. Muhadi Sugiono, an observer of International Relations as well as the activist of world peace from the UGM Faculty of Social and Politics Sciences, appreciated Indonesia's efforts in hosting the ASEAN Summit for finishing the crisis in Myanmar. However, he suggested that this KTT effectivity should not have been ended in the collective conclusion, but it must be manifested through concrete action. Muhadi suggested that ASEAN ministers should take lessons from the Jakarta Informal Meeting in solving the Indochina conflict.

"Putting the parties involved is a must for ASEAN if they want to really take a role in solving the conflict," said Muhadi Sugiono on Tuesday (27/4).

In the Jakarta Informal Meeting from 1988 to 1990, Indonesia invited parties involved in the conflict to discuss. In this Myanmar case, Muhadi believed it was one of the mandatory steps to solve it. He saw the ASEAN Summit as the advancement of ASEAN relations with its country's ministers. The non-interference principle made its ministers hesitate to respond to problems in each country because they perceived domestic affairs as personal business. "It now will be different from the previous case, ASEAN Summit concerning Myanmar crisis can be a breakthrough. Moreover, if it results in a fair-good conclusion by stopping the violence in Myanmar," he said.



Muhadi added that it was not easy and not necessarily effective to stop the crisis in Myanmar at the ASEAN Summit because he considered the conclusion from this conference actually reflected a relatively low common denominator. "This decision-making practice is a general implementation within organizations, including ASEAN. The country's ministers within this conference will definitely come to a consensus if they are free from any threat. However, this Myanmar case indicates that the ASEAN decision reflects a relatively low common denominator because of some factors. First is the absence of important parties such as The Prime Minister of Thailand, Prayuth Chan-Ocha, and President of the Philippines, Rodrigo Duterte. Secondly, the presence of the Leaders of a Military Junta within the meeting," he said.

The presence of the Military Junta, which once overthrew the democratic government, is another hindrance for ASEAN to make a firm decision for Myanmar. "The ASEAN reputation will seem to be collapsed if they give a strict attitude only for Myanmar, but not for Thailand. As yet, this is a prominent homework to do for ASEAN," he concluded.

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