

*CHAPTER IX*

CHAPTER IX: CHALLENGES FOR ASEAN IN THE FUTURE

Southeast Asia has been stable and prosperous in the past, but the changes occurring with the end of the Cold War have made continued stability uncertain. The nature of security issues has changed considerably from the more military confrontations to the more political, economic and social challenges posed by both new states and the remnants of old ones which have collapsed.

As matters stand today, the internal security of ASEAN countries, which is the basic platform of ASEAN strategy for regional peace and stability, is strong and optimistic. In this regard, the ASEAN countries will need to realise that security should begin at home, and rests on the foundations of responsible, efficient, democratic government. It seems the role of the sovereign state is declining as regional and global linkages and private non-governmental contacts between individuals and groups tend to proliferate and strengthen.

It has been said that organizations that have been successful in promoting security through social, economic and political growth in their regions have tended to be those offering a series of practical and positive inducements to cooperation. Thus, regional and sub-regional organizations play vital supporting roles in building a viable world order. Accordingly, there are great challenges and responsibilities before regional group such as ASEAN.

Organization like ASEAN play significant role to security not only in their own neighbourhood but also globally through putting forward their own ideas on this subject in the international debate. ASEAN has been recognised internationally as a positive and an important factor for peace and stability in the region. Accordingly, ASEAN have done this with confidence, bearing in mind its successful record of solving the problems of state development and contributing to peace in Cambodia.

With the end of the Cold War, however, the region is in a period of transition. Thus, it is timely for ASEAN to take steps to develop a dialogue in the political security, and economic fields so that when circumstances change and cooperation is needed the institutions will be place to function properly.