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The Role of Parliament in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG): A study of Multi Parliamentary Cooperation and Southeast Asian parliaments

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Abstract:

The Agenda 2030 or the Sustainable Development Goals/SDG is an ambitious plan for the world to achieve and so far, since 2016, 193 countries have ratified the SDG agenda to show nation-states' commitment to participate. These SDG work are mostly discussed by the executive governments/actors and civil society organizations, and my overall research project questions whether the parliament may have roles in this SDG agenda too. The lack of parliament's participation or people's participation in many world's agenda has been notified, yet parliaments and international parliamentary forums, along with multi-parliamentary sessions exist and discussed the SDG topic in their agenda. These parliamentary discussions about the SDG have somehow been buried or not notified widely. Is this due to the nature of parliamentary essence or the parliamentary institutional structure?

This research is based on studying the three national parliaments in Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore) and observing sessions of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the European Parliament (it was planned to include the ASEAN Parliamentary Assembly/AIPA too, but this organization does not ratified the SDG so I drop this institution from the research), also observing the international parliamentary forums of the World Parliamentary Forum of SDG and the Europe Asia Parliamentary Partnership (ASEP), as part of the ASEM, Asia Europe Meetings. Studying these institutions —using the Institutional theory— and tested against the “essence of parliamentarism in 4 aspects”, namely deliberation, representation, responsibility and sovereignty (Ihalainen, Ilie and Palonen 2016), and used the parliamentary ethnography as the method, the study shows that parliament has **limited** roles in SDG due to the nature of parliamentary works and institutional constraints. The study also shows the **inequal** relationship between parliamentary institutions from Asia (and Africa, or former colonialized countries) and from Europe. Regarding the parliamentarism, the study may add another role of parliament, which is diplomacy and network, but not “scrutinizing function” as proposed in the earlier research (Bursens and Högenauer, 2017).

Keywords: parliament(ary) organisation, SDG, multi-parliamentary cooperation, Southeast Asia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, WPFSD, , ASEP, European Parliament

1. Introduction

The Agenda 2030 of sustainable development goals (SDG) has been introduced in 2015, and since then, most political institutions, government and parliament at state level, and civil society organization (CSO) work on this agenda, as around 193 countries ratified this United Nation's SDG idea. It is a robust and an ambitious agenda. The SDG agenda has 17 goals which cover whole aspects of people's life, from education, work force, gender equality and natural protection (forest,

water etc.) that are expected to be achieved by 2030. Moreover, with this SDG agenda, it is likely that the new emphasis in the political discourse is in the supranational governance and implementation of supranational political goals at the national level, as mutual-cooperation among states is needed. This works relatively smooth at the executive government and world actors, but how about linking the work of SDG into the parliamentary/legislative side?

The parliament has been criticized of not voicing citizen enough and the role of civil society organization/CSO in discussing SDG somehow is more active than parliaments. The lack of parliament's participation or people's participation in many world's agenda has been notified too (Raunio, 2006). This is puzzling as parliament is a formal and legal political institution to represent people at the national level. Furthermore, parliaments and international parliamentary forums exist and discuss the SDG topic in their agenda sessions regularly. These parliamentary discussions and forums about the SDG have somehow been buried or not widely notified. Many parliaments has not yet engage SDG into their works (UN World Public Sector Report 2018). Is this due to the nature of parliamentary essence or the structure designed by parliamentary institution?

In my current post-doc project is entitled: *Unity in Diversity? International Parliamentary Institutions for Southeast Asia and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)* studying the role parliament in SDG, international parliamentary institutions and parliamentary relationship between Europe and Southeast Asia, I find out that the parliaments do not influence much in this SDG agenda, and the SDG program is shaped heavily by the policy of the executive government. This is a book proposal on the role of parliament in SDG, with the case study of Southeast Asian perspective, from the countries of: Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. The research also studies the sessions of parliamentary forums at the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and parliamentary forum of the World Parliamentary Forum of Sustainable Development (WPFSD) and the Europe Asia Parliamentary Partnership (ASEP), as part of the ASEM, Asia Europe Meetings. In studying all these institutions, I use the (historical) Institutional theory, combining with the "essence of parliamentarism in 4 aspects", namely deliberation, representation, responsibility and sovereignty (Ihalainen, Ilie and Palonen 2016), and used the parliamentary ethnography as the method. Based on such theoretical and method, the study shows that parliament has **limited** roles in SDG due to the nature of parliamentary works and institutional constraints. The study also shows the **inequal** relationship between parliamentary institutions of Asia (and Africa, or former colonized countries) from its counterparts of Europe¹. Regarding the parliamentarism, the study may add

¹ More study about parliamentary relations between Europe and (Southeast) Asia is needed. Apparently, studying the regional parliamentary institution like the European Parliament is not enough without including the dimension of studying national European parliament individually. This will be proposed for my next research.

another role of parliament, which is diplomacy and network, but not “scrutinizing function” as proposed in the earlier research (Bursens and Högenauer, 2017).

Even though the nature of parliaments as people representatives, theoretically are close to people/ constituents, has power on legislative review and holds the government accountable, parliament has limited power to push SDG to move forward and be implemented at the local people, if not supported by the executive government. This is usually exercised by the Westminster-type of government, where the executive government is selected from the members of parliament, thus the parliament is aware of the SDG program. Furthermore, when moving the SDG discussion from the national level to the international forum, the representative background of parliamentary members has been questioned during the participation in these international forums: how does the process of selection, based on committee or member of parliament’s (MP) interest? Meanwhile, the priority of legislation at the national level does not always related to SDG (although the topic coverage of SDG include to most of states’ activities and policy). In legislative discussion, sometimes members of parliaments do not realize the legislation relevance to SDG, or the SDG is known only by limited numbers of MP. Today, with the mechanism of electing the president or head of state directly, parliamentary role is likely unheard compared to the executive achievement. This view confirm the earlier research, stated that “parliaments struggle to scrutinize the organization in which national executives play a major role” (Eppler and Maurer, 2017: 238).

This hypothesis, that the parliament has limited influence or role in SDG agenda, as stated earlier, is more applicable to parliament as a separate institution from the government, meaning this does not apply to Westminster-type of government, where the executive government is selected from the members of parliament. In my focus study of the national parliaments in Southeast Asia: Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, both the parliamentary members of Malaysia and Singapore, which adopted Westminster-type of government, are generally aware of SDG and may link this to their role in legislation or oversight to ministers’ works. However, only MP who has direct contact with government will be aware about SDG and its policy in their countries. In Indonesia, where the parliament (DPR) is a separate institution, the weakness of parliament compared to the government is apparent—despite the availability of SDG working group in the Indonesian parliament’s DPR—. Therefore, based on this study, the findings likely reveal an utopian thinking in regards to the relationship between national parliaments and supranational political institution and their policies such as the SDG. In overall of my post-doc research, I contend that the lacking of actual parliamentary responsibility in the global agenda, such as the SDG is actually based on the institutional structures of the parliamentary organizations in general.

Furthermore, while the national parliamentary example as show by the Southeast Asian case has shown weakness without the support from the executive government, the sessions of

international parliamentary institutions and forums as the IPU, WPFSD and ASEP also show interesting result. These events are world level parliamentary forum, although the later, mostly affect to regions of Europe and Asia (and not to the whole world) however, such big events involving hundreds of parliamentary members only resulted the declaration or recommendation. The declaration document is weak and not binding to all countries, unlike the executive-like gatherings, which result on agreement, thus the level of commitment is more convincing. This example supports the argument above about limited role of parliament as seen in multi-parliamentary gatherings or forums, and I think that this happens due to parliamentary institutional structure or design.

The project, I hope, may contribute to the discussion of sustainable agenda that still been discussed today, adding the parliamentary perspective for the global goal discussion. During the implementation of the SDG agenda, it will be good for international agency which developing programs for parliamentary capacity building to upgrade the capacity of parliamentary members and the institutions to participate more within the work-scope of SDG Agenda. If the lack of the parliamentary role in this book is addressed, then the idea of “no one leaves behind” including such important institution, as parliament, can be really more meaningful.

In detailing this view, the following section, Section 2, will present the research objective, following by explanation of theory and methodology in Section 3. Then, Section 4 will inform the result or findings and finally the conclusion will summarize this paper. This is the first introduction of my book proposal of my research. I will briefly explain the idea, contents and finding of the research. All feedbacks are welcomed.

2. Objective

The role of parliament in public policy usually related to the parliamentary legislation and budgeting practices of the government’s proposal. This process is complex and depends also on the formulation stage, interest groups, issue and areas, and official working on the details (Guess and Husted, 2017: 11). Moreover, certain groups, including political parties and even citizen may influence lawmakers to design legislation suitable to certain interests. Due to this complex process, which reflect politics, policy process and country’s culture, the result of the proposed public policy will likely differ from the initial stage to accommodate different and variety of interest in the parliament. The parliamentary participation in the discussion of the global goal, such as the SDG, is even more complex, and requires many layers of contestation, negotiation and adaptation.

Proposed title and content ***“Parliament and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG: Contestations of parliamentary culture, multi-parliamentary cooperation and Europe-Southeast Asia relations”***

1. INTRODUCTION: PARLIAMENTS, SOUTHEAST ASIA AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Global Goals 2030

Parliamentarization in the sustainable development goals

Parliaments in Southeast Asia: characters and structure

Parliamentary institutions in focus

Relations between Europe and Southeast Asia through parliaments

Institutionalism, “essence of parliamentarism” and parliamentary ethnography

Structure of the book

2. SOUTHEAST ASIAN PARLIAMENTARY CULTURE

Political culture and authoritarian executives

Parliaments in Southeast Asia: characters and structure (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore)

Political change in Southeast Asia

Global Goals in the parliaments

Bilateral relationship with Europe

3. MULTI-PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNANCE and SDG

World parliamentary organization and forum

Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)

World Parliamentary Forum on Sustainable Development (WPFSD)

Regional parliamentary organization and forum

European Parliament

ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly/AIPA

Asia Europe Parliamentary Assembly (ASEP)

National parliaments in Southeast Asia

Indonesia

Malaysia

Singapore

Local parliamentary dimensions in need

Multi-parliamentary governance and its challenges

4. EUROPE-SOUTHEAST ASIAN RELATIONS THROUGH PARLIAMENTS

Development of relations

Europe and Southeast Asia

ASEAN and EU

AIPA and EP

Comparison between two regions

ASEAN and EU

Europe and Southeast Asia

Parliamentary cooperation

5. THE ROLE PARLIAMENTS IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Challenges in multi-parliamentary governance

Global, Regional, National and local

Parliamentary tasks

Global legislation

Global oversight

Parliamentary diplomacy

Comparison

Promoting parliamentarization for the global goals

Conclusion

Ideally, I think, for the successful implementation of global agenda, such as SDG, the top down direction of executive orders coming to the national level from the supranational or inter-parliamentary level is balanced by the basic idea of democracy, the bottom process, that is exercised by the representative institution, as parliament. However, while the process at the executive runs well, the existence of the parliamentary dimension or from the representative side, at the supranational governance returns to local level, appears to be missing. The members of parliament, with their complex background of constituent, political parties, groups' interest and individual agenda, often act to extend the executive programs to the constituents, and not the other way around!

We all know that it is important to involve as many actors as possible in the successful of global agreement. It would be ideal if together with the government side, the civil society organisations, media, private sectors, the people's voice, represented by the parliament will ideally ensure the successful of the programme. The SDG itself has a slogan of 'none leaves behind', meaning more actors involve, more successful this agenda to run. This view is likely still has a long way to happen.

Based on the interviews of many parliamentary members, secretariat officers and observation of parliamentary sessions at the national parliaments and the international parliamentary forums, discussed in detailed below, the way of parliamentary forum runs the event is similar to the executive government gathering: listening to speeches of state leaders. The parliamentary forums also have panels of listening to speeches of speakers (conducted by members of parliament and experts, even also the government actors, like ministers). Organizing speeches at the parliamentary forums like this will likely repeat to what the executive government has said at other executive forums. With such similar design of agenda within the world forum/gatherings, the government as the *executor* of the policy will exercise the program relatively easier at the state level, the parliament does not have such luxury. The parliamentary members may "report" such international activities to constituents, but they may not execute programs nor any policies. While the result of executive government gathering is usually agreements that bind to countries, the result of parliamentary forums and gathering is usually declarations, which is weak and relatively only recommend certain actions. No (moral) sanction for failing to impose for declaration.

Therefore, during the international parliamentary gatherings, having the forum set up like the executive's will not be effective for the parliament, especially the feedback from the floor/audience (with members of parliaments as participants) after the speakers spoke is usually only for limited time. The parliament's task is to speak! It is probably more effective for the parliament for sharing

experience or stories of how constituents affected by the government policy, so while sharing, the parliamentary members may also have feedback for scrutinizing the government's works. With this design, the idea is for the parliamentary members to speak more, to share the experience of their constitutions, to learn from best practices, even to connect with other parliaments who have similar background of constituents. The importance is to involve **the constituents' or public voices** of parliamentary members at the international forum (therefore, selected members of parliaments who represent the country must be rotated for such purposes, allowing variety of geographical constituents). However, until today, even the example of forums below, only gave limited time for members of parliament to share their stories with their constituents and giving more time for speakers (even for members of parliament) to share what their country's government policy and achievement, thus only repeated of what the executive forums has already said at another occasions.

3. Theoretical review and methodology

As stated above, in studying all the institutions covered by the research, I use the (historical) Institutional theory. This theory contends, as I wrote earlier (Adiputri, 2019: 152), that 'institutions have the ability to influence and determine political strategies and political outcomes...[meaning] that institutions matter due to their ability to shape the strategies and goals of actors, mediate cooperation and conflict and structure political situation' (Allison, 2015, p. 126, quoted from Steinmo, Thelen & Longstreth, 1992). Specifically in relation to historical institutionalism, the institutions in the study is viewed based on their 'construction, maintenance, and adaptation of institutions' (Sanders, 2006, p. 42).

Ihalainen, Ilie and Palonen (2016) stated in their edited book about the "essence of parliamentarism in 4 aspects", namely deliberation, representation, responsibility and sovereignty. These essence are differed from the basic parliamentary role of legislating, budgeting and oversight, but they are important to be exercised in the parliaments and best if these essence are stated within the parliamentary procedure and exercise.

Along with interviews members of parliament and secretariat officers, I use the parliamentary ethnography as the method when observing parliamentary sessions. Busby (2013) has used this ethnographic approach in studying the routine and everyday life of members of European Parliament (MEP) to understand their activities inside the EP institution. I also used the same methodology, as I wrote already earlier (Adiputri, 2019), following the anthropologist Emma Crewe (2016) who used this (methodological and theoretical) approach to study the House of Lords (1998-2000) and in the House of Commons (2011-2013). The approach is useful for understanding the dynamic of plenary session during the forums. According to Crewe, parliamentary ethnography is

doing ethnography in parliament. Ethnography aims to engage with people ‘to find out how they act, think, talk and relate to each other’, added with the ethnographers’ reflection as part of the research, rather than attempting to remove their influence from the research findings’ (Crewe, 2016). With this methodology, ethnographers will ‘understand wider processes occurring within the context’ (Busby, 2013: 98) thus from the observation of the forum, I understand that the limited role of the parliament in being heard and more active in the SDG discussion is more or less due to its structural design of the events or the parliamentary organizations themselves.

4. Results

The study has findings that:

- the public policy by legislation based on the SDG agenda is less likely initiated from the parliament, but more on the work of the executive government. The nature of parliamentary works, added with variety of interest and multiple background of members of parliaments, political parties’ priorities and constituency need differ greatly.
- the nature of weak result of the parliamentary cooperation or forums is due to the set up/design of the meeting, which is more for listening, and not sharing between members of parliament. This is due also for language barrier, limited time, different of parliamentary culture.

This hypothesis is seen clearly from the examples of

1. national parliamentary institution: Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore
2. international organization, IPU, and two parliamentary forums WPFSD and ASEP10

National parliaments of Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore

(please access my paper about this, from the:

Adiputri, Ratih (2019) ““Social Science Research in Southeast Asia: the Challenges of Studying Parliamentary Institutions”, IKAT (The Indonesian Journal of Southeast Asian Studies) vol 2 no. 2 2019, pp. 147-179. <https://jurnal.ugm.ac.id/ikat/article/view/40814/23557>

IPU, WPFSD and ASEP

IPU:...(in progress of writing)

WPFSD: This forum is initiated and organized by the Indonesian parliament DPR (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat* or the House of Representatives) and) in 2017, and holds annually in Bali island, Indonesia. The WPFSD is “the forum discusses matters related to sustainable development issues and efforts of parliaments around the world to address the issue” (WPFSD website). The

forum aims for empowering the parliamentarians on sustainable issues, building networks among members of parliament and providing a forum for sharing best practices. All this aim then, by the end of the event, will be documented in “a declaration that constitutes as a summary of policy analysis, experience and best practices from various countries and various sectors related to sustainable development”².

Exercised similar to the Indonesian style of holding events, the 2nd WPFSD, that I observed for this paper, was the second year forum that the DPR organized. It was held on 12-13 September 2018, and this 2nd WPFSD had a theme on “Partnership towards Sustainable Energy”. This theme while important was mainly because of the advice of the leadership in the DPR and not based on the discussion from the committee as a whole. I questioned the theme also, because based on the 2017 Indonesian Voluntary Report on SDG to the UN (written by the National Board of Planning Agency), the Indonesian government’s focus for the SDG in that year was on the theme of education and woman empowerment. Therefore, the issue of energy discussed by the WPFSD was incompatible with the executive government’s focus. However, knowing that the theme was came up only from one committee chair’s view without the consultation, it was no wonder for mismatch agenda.

The event was held at the high-class hotel of The Patra Bali Hotel, and since the pre-event opening dinner, as an Indonesian party-style, the guests or participants (mostly members of parliament of many neighboring states) were spoiled with delicious free food and free goodies. Such free delicious food continued to be provided for the whole 2-day-event both for lunch and dinner. The grand-opening had an attractive cultural performance and promotions, pampering the dinner participants with Balinese dances. Throughout the forum, participants may also enjoy delicious snacks available in the venue’s lobby and photo session.

The forum timetable was packed with plenary session, with diplomatic and bilateral meetings along the running of sessions. These sessions gave opportunities for panelist to deliver the keynote speeches or short lectures related to plenary themes: (1) responsible energy consumption and production for sustainable cities and communities; (2) quality education and technology towards green industry; (3) women participation and sustainable energy; and (4) the way forward: parliamentary action for universal access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy. Every panel was held for 2 hours with around 3 or 4 speakers (30 minutes talk each), thus only providing a few minutes time from the audience (participants) to give feedback or ask questions for the speakers. The speakers were distinguished persons from Indonesian ministers, directors or actors from civil society organization, to members of parliament (even speakers of a country’s parliament).

² The official presentation of WPFSD is available in <http://ksap.dpr.go.id/pfsd2017/page/detail/id/255> accessed on 5 October 2018.

Interestingly, while delegations (mostly members of parliament) from 45 countries attended the forum, none were come from Europe. They were came from Southeast Asia, Latin America and South Pacific areas, mostly developing countries. Indonesia was just finished organizing another international parliamentary forum, Indonesia-Pacific Parliamentary Partnership in late July 2018, and most South Pacific countries attended both events. The participants coming from countries of Pacific islands were actually shown that small island countries are important for Indonesia at the moment, although admiration towards Western countries from Europe and North America has never diminished.

The forum also showed that it was mostly for get-together of parliaments and delegations in Bali, instead of pushing certain agenda towards the world. As stated above, the agenda was determined by the chairs and not by participants or based on committee agreement. In the opening ceremony speech, the committee chairperson highlighted the intention for ‘raising awareness’ of parliament (minutes p. 2) It was also a *listening* forum, not a debating chamber of parliament, as not a smaller committee other than plenary session had been set up. This is similar to the design of the Indonesian parliamentary chamber, where the members of parliaments are expected to listen to speeches and not to debate (Adiputri, 2015). WPFSD was more on networking with a weak recommendation as the result. The commitment, called Bali Commitment, resulted from the forum is “a non-legal binding forum” (minutes, p. 42).

The 2nd WPFSD event has a good effort of (developing) countries to raise awareness about SDG, however, the 2-day-event did not bring a new knowledge. The speakers giving presentation with heavy topics of energy, especially from ministries (executive government) and NGO/CSO, naturally irrelevant to the tasks of parliaments. Furthermore, with limited time for audience to comment, when there was available time for comments, participants would share their own country’s experience, which was another short lecture or speech prepared in advance from the floor, instead of questions for the panelists. It was likely that most participants would like to contribute to the plenary, but the English language barrier (not comfortable to speak publicly in English) made them reading their prepared English speech instead of spontaneous remarks. Language is supposed to be a barrier, but it showed that most members of parliament liked to talk and speak in the forum. The time was severely limited. As stated above, it was probably better for the parliamentary gathering as WPFSD like this, the parliamentary members were given sufficient amount to share their experience or stories from their constituents how they are affected by the energy policy of the country, etc, so while sharing, the parliamentary members may also have feedback for scrutinizing the government’s works later in their parliamentary works/meetings or committees.

With this new proposal for designing parliamentary event, especially international forum involving parliaments from many countries, the parliamentary forum or cooperation is ideally

organized to give only 1 speaker to open the discussion and theme. Later, give 2- hour slot or more for the parliamentary members to speak from the floor/from their seats (with registration in advance or certain procedure) to create a sense of debate and discussion, not from podium. I think this will give more chance for all parliamentary members, not only those with position, opportunities to share the experience of their constitutions, to learn from best practices, even to connect with other parliaments who have similar background of constituents from different country. This also gives opportunity for cooperation and effective public policy.

With the current design, and a weak declaration, it is likely that the tendency of limited voice from the parliament continue.

Europe Asia Parliamentary Partnership (ASEP)

The Asia-Europe Parliamentary Partnership (ASEP), as stated in its widely-distributed leaflet, is a forum for parliamentary members of Asia and Europe to contact, exchanges, and conducting diplomacy. The idea is to ‘promote mutual understanding among the people’ between these two regions. The meeting is part of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) that was first held in Bangkok in 1996, which add the parliamentary dimension of the ASEM meetings. The gathering is held every two year alternating between Asia and Europe. The country members are 53 in total, with 30 European and 21 Asian countries, the EU and the ASEAN Secretariat. The last ASEP meeting was conducting in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia in 2016.

The 10th Asia-Europe Parliamentary Partnership, or ASEP10, was held on 27-28 September 2018 in Brussels, Belgium. Organized by the European Parliament (EP), the EP Vice President, Heidi Hautala (Greens, Finland) took in charge in organizing the forum. It is worth to note that the EP, or parliament of the European Union/EU, is “known more for its law and bureaucracy than for its justice and democracy” (Busby 2013: 95). Meanwhile, the forum of ASEP is an *informal* process of dialogue and cooperation. There is no legislative decision, and consequently the discussions and sessions will not have legal-binding consequence to members. The idea is for expanding network among parliamentarians so they may cooperate to each other according to their (countries) interests. This time, while the EP was the host, the meeting was also presided with the Speaker of the Bangladesh Parliament, Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, and President of the Australian Senate, Scott Ryan. The theme of ASEP10 is “climate change and environmental challenges” and it is discussed in three different committee on the impacts to security, migration and economy.

Panel 1 discussed about impact of climate change and environment on economy. The session was opened by the chairs, Ms. Neena Gill from the EP and Mr. Yuan Si from China, whom giving opportunity for keynotes speakers to deliver their speeches. Keynote speakers were 2 members of parliament from member certain countries, this time from Romania, Mr. Allen Coliban and from

Bangladesh, Ms. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, and an expert that delivered a speech related to the theme, here from the coordinator of the Asia-Europe People's Forum (AEPF), Ms. Lidy Nacpil. While there was a discussion after the keynote speakers' presentation, the members were mostly shared what their executive governments in their countries have been doing. Most delegations, especially from Asian countries, will read the prepared speech and read the text instead of responding to what the keynote speakers had just presented.

Panel 2 discussed "Climate change and environment: impact on migration". The panel was chaired also by 2 chairs Ms Jean Lambert of the EP and Ms Irina Gekht of the Russian Federation. The panel gave session to an expert, professors from the University of Pisa, Ms Barbara Bonciani & Ms Serena Gianfaldoni, and keynote from parliaments of Indonesia and Bulgaria, Mrs Assegaf Nurhayati Ali and Ms Ivelina Vassileva. Similar to what happened at Panel 1, in this panel too, the parliamentary keynote delivered speech about country's achievement in general.

In Panel 3, the theme discussed was "climate change and environment: impact on security". I found this panel was the most interesting one. The panel was chaired by the Latvian MEP, Ms Iveta Grigule, and Mr Gleb Chshegelskiy from Kazakhstan, which open the discussion about clean energy (by 2020). The keynote speakers were Mr Lukas Müller, from Asia-Europe Foundation, followed by speeches from Kazakhstan, Mr Kul-Mukhammed Mukhtar, and Slovenian parliament, Mrs Ljudmila Novak. The experts notified about the insecurity issues in the future: from the reduction in fresh water resources and in agriculture production to the increase of natural disaster (storm and flood catastrophe) and infectious diseases. And again, the parliamentary speakers boosted their case from their home countries (executive works) and not from their constituent backgrounds.

From Panel 3, I found that the developed country parliamentary members (Norway and Belgium) asked from the experts what to do to mitigate the problems. Others, again, the parliamentary speakers who spoke would shared their government's achievement. Singapore is a good case. Singaporean parliamentary member shared his country's experience in water sustainability and how other may have this opportunity to learn to overcome water security. This member seemed to know his stuff (his name was not catches up) that he delivered his remark with simple language that was easily followed by public, and not with government policy jargon, also without ready-prepared speech as others, describing his constituent's experience with this water regulation in Singapore.

The ASEP10 also produced a declaration which was sort of a "statement" thus it is not strong enough to push executive for implementation. But somehow, building public "awareness" is reached, as the people may see the debate, streaming online by the EP channel, which shows that EP institution as supra-parliamentary organization is ready in terms of media-technology compared

to other, say to other national parliaments. This ASEP10 statement was also passed to ASEM meeting, informing that parliament likes to oversee the ASEM declaration too.

The WPFSD of the Indonesian Parliament was held grandly with cultural performance show. The event was likely to emphasize on the networking event for the parliamentary members. Meanwhile, the ASEP 10 held by the European Parliament tried to uphold the parliamentary style of debating and discussing per committee. This purpose was similar, that was to ‘expanding networking among parliamentarians’. Although these two forums ran with different parliamentary style of politics, yet these forums have similar results –*declaration*– which consider weak for asking commitment of global goals to be exercised.

These two forums also shows that most members of parliament from countries spoke highly on their countries and their countries’ executive achievement. This is acceptable, but the MP rarely discussed what their constituents do for the successful of sustainable program locally. Only one country, a representative from Singapore in Panel 3 shared what the country has been achieved to tackle the water (and food security) from the people’s perspective, not solely from the government’s side. Sharing information like this is really important and should be encouraged to all parliamentary forum and gathering, especially if the case is relevant with the committee work at the national level. This is what parliament should do. I think the parliamentary members are representatives, working in between the executive government and people, whose tasks are overseeing the government and legislating. Being people’s representative (constituents must be really important), parliamentary members also act as diplomat in these international events, but bringing the voice of their constituents more to this event, without repeated what the country government have said at another forum. The weak declaration later may be reported back to their and constituents and to the countries’ governments through legislation or oversight process. The sharing information or discussion is also better exercised in public through parliamentary plenums.

5. Conclusion

This overall research, also based on these 2 forums above, shows that parliament is still weak to promote the implementation of global international policy or global development agenda, such as SDG through legislation without the support of executive government. If the SDG agenda is transformed to public policy, it is really more an initiative of the executive government, not parliament. As seen from both parliamentary gatherings, internationally (as seen in WPFSD) or regionally (like ASEP), parliament still design the event for giving limited time to speak, notably to

share the constituency story related to the SDG or the theme of the parliamentary events. During the events, participants (mostly parliamentary members) has only limited time to speak.

The design of the parliamentary event today is likely follow the executive gathering, with the speakers gave lecture to members. However, this paper promotes that the parliamentary forums give chances from the parliamentary members to speak more, from the audience seats (not from the podium) so the voice of public or constituents are heard in international forum, other than the plenary of national parliaments. Promoting this will show the difference between parliamentary works and executive works that naturally differ to each other.

In the long run, it is important that the national parliaments are able to “translate” the global agreement or their experience in these forums into national agenda and results in effective national law/policy. Not only bridging the differences needs to be acknowledge, it needs to be exercise fast, for the SDG has time limit to achieve. It is still a challenge for the parliament to push the SDG agenda with this current international/organizational design, but if the intention parliamentary forum, let’s say, to acknowledge efforts of parliaments around the world to address the sustainable development issues, this only can be achieved if the parliaments have this opportunity to speak in their own parliamentary forums, events or cooperation. As stated by the WPFSD’s purpose, it is important for members of parliament for “building networks” and have forums “forum for sharing best practices”, thus the members of parliaments must have opportunities to speak on behalf of constituents.

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