

City Diplomacy, Multilateral Networks and the Role of Southeast Asia

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ABSTRACT

In the wake of globalization, cities have increasingly engaged in international affairs. Positioning as in-between administrative entities and to reconcile between competing national interests and universal objectives like the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), cities could demonstrate their agency in providing alternative pursuit of global development. In particular, while international affairs have in a way environmentalized, global environmentalism in turn has strongly urbanized in recent decades. Many cities along the coast, in Asia or broader world alike, are at the forefront of climate change impacts and would be vulnerable to any catastrophes such as the Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004. After all, given the size of city economies, the material losses caused by climate-induced extreme weather can be tremendous. Thus, it is worthwhile to examine the role of Southeast Asian cities in international development in terms of their transnational networking. Moreover, the phenomenon that cities becoming active players in international affairs has been explored mostly in relation to North American, European or Western setting. Literature on cities' transnational and multi-level engagement in the EU has been abundant. By contrast, there is very few researches focusing on the part of ASEAN in mainstream literature on city diplomacy or paradiplomacy. The primary purpose of this paper is thus to examine the state of play by Southeast Asian cities in some key multilateral networkings such as C40 Cities, International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG).

Keywords: city diplomacy, Southeast Asia, transnational networking, multilateral networking

Kota-kota semakin terlibat dalam urusan internasional setelah globalisasi mulai muncul ke permukaan. Memposisikan sebagai entitas administratif di antara dan untuk merekonsiliasi antara kepentingan nasional yang bersaing dan tujuan universal seperti Tujuan Pembangunan Berkelanjutan PBB (SDGs), kota-kota dapat menunjukkan peran mereka dalam memberikan alternatif pengejaran pembangunan global. Lebih lanjut, ketika isu lingkungan telah mendominasi dunia internasional, para pemikir lingkungan global telah membuatnya menjadi lebih urban dalam beberapa dekade. Banyak kota di daerah pantai, baik di regional Asia ataupun di regional lainnya di dunia, berada dalam resiko tinggi akan perubahan iklim dan rentan terhadap bencana seperti tsunami, seperti yang terjadi di Samudra Hindia tahun 2004. Terlebih lagi, mengingat ukuran ekonomi kota, kerugian materiil disebabkan oleh cuaca ekstrem yang disebabkan oleh iklim cenderung cukup besar. Dengan demikian, ada baiknya untuk memeriksa peran kota-kota Asia Tenggara dalam pengembangan internasional dalam hal jaringan transnasional mereka. Selain itu, fenomena bahwa kota menjadi pemain aktif dalam urusan internasional telah dieksplorasi sebagian besar di kawasan Amerika Utara, Eropa atau Barat. Literatur tentang keterlibatan transnasional dan multi-level kota-kota di Uni Eropa telah berlimpah. Sebaliknya, masih sedikit penelitian yang berfokus pada bagian ASEAN dalam literatur arus utama tentang diplomasi kota atau paradiplomasi. Tujuan utama dari tulisan prospektif ini adalah untuk menguji keadaan permainan oleh kota-kota Asia Tenggara di beberapa jaringan multilateral utama seperti Kota C40, Dewan Internasional untuk Inisiatif Lingkungan Lokal (ICLEI) dan United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG).

Kata-Kata Kunci: diplomasi antar kota, Asia Tenggara, jaringan transnasional, jaringan multilateral

In the wake of globalization, cities have increasingly asserting themselves through building direct transborder contacts with each other. Positioning as “in-between” administrative entities and to reconcile between competing national interests and universal objectives like the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), cities could demonstrate their agency in providing alternative pursuit of global development. In particular, while international affairs have in a way environmentalized, global environmentalism in turn has strongly urbanized in recent decades. Many cities located along the coast, in Asia or broader world alike, are at the forefront of climate change impacts and would be vulnerable to any catastrophes such as the Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004. After all, given the size of city economies, the material losses caused by climate-induced extreme weather can be tremendous. Thus, it is worthwhile to examine the role of Southeast Asian cities in international development.

Moreover, the phenomenon that cities becoming active players in international affairs has been explored mostly in relation to North American, European or Western setting. Literature on cities’ transnational and multi-level engagement in the EU has been abundant. By contrast, there is very few academic researches focusing on the part of ASEAN in mainstream literature on city diplomacy or paradiplomacy. What is the part played by Southeast Asian cities in the practice of paradiplomacy? The primary purpose of this paper is thus to address the puzzle and to examine the state of play, mainly in terms of memberships and leaderships, by Southeast Asian cities in some key multilateral networkings, especially those related to environmental sustainable development, such as C40 Cities, International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) or general one of the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). This research will draw primarily from official website sources of these multilateral networks, supplemented with secondary ones of scholarly studies.

This paper will argue that city diplomacy could be examined within the broader context of transborder engagement by substates. The first section of the paper will put city diplomacy in the broader conceptual context. In outlining this conceptual linkage, it will highlight a recent formulation of such conceptual framework by Alexander Kuznetsov. The paper will proceed then to outline the aforementioned instances of global and general-oriented city networkings, followed by an examination on the role of Southeast Asian cities in multilateral networking in those general-oriented setting as well as their practices within ASEAN regional context.

City Diplomacy in the Context of Sub-state Transborder Engagement

Conceptually, “city diplomacy” does not arise from nowhere. Nor is it strictly a contemporary phenomenon. At least in European setting, it has been practiced for centuries since ancient Greece. Insofar as city networking is concerned, European cities along the North Sea and the Baltic had created the Hanseatic League. (Barber 2013: 108-9) It should not be treated as a unique phenomenon undertaken by municipal level of administrative units alone. In terms of units of analysis, “cities”, as the key actors on the subject, could be readily subsumed within and conceptualized as part of broader categories of “sub-states” (Scholte 2005: 203-6), “sub-national governments” (Jain 2005; Kuznetsov 2015), “non-central governments” (NCGs) (Hocking 1993) or simply as “regions” (Lecours 2002).

Insofar as the act of “diplomacy” by municipal actors is concerned, it is often equivalent to the conception of “paradiplomacy”. In definition, “paradiplomacy” is generally referred to transborder engagement, networking, or simply put, the involvement of the constituent units of national states in international affairs. (Kuznetsov 2015) In

some way, it was genetically regarded as being driven by nationalism especially in the context of those nations without states. As such, the processes of nationalism that involves identity construction, interest definition and political–territorial mobilization, logically results in the constituent units searching for an international personality, or serves as an instrument for identity- and nation-building or to promote cultural uniqueness. The intergovernmental conflict it entails provides rooms for political–territorial mobilization. Nevertheless, domestic and international structural contexts play an important part in conditioning the consequences of nationalism for substates operating internationally, but also in determining the likelihood of paradiplomatic activity in the absence of nationalism. It should be added that “paradiplomacy” is not the only conceptualization when it comes to phenomena related to substates’ transborder engagement. In various literature, to name a few, it has been associated with “multilayered diplomacy”(Hocking 1993), “plurinational diplomacy”(Aldecoa 1999), “proto-diplomacy”(Duchacek et al 1988), “micro diplomacy”(Duchacek 1984), “perforated sovereignty”(Duchacek 1984; Duchacek et al 1988), “foreign policy localization”(Hocking 1993) or “international activities of region”(Lecours 2002).

Dimensions of Paradiplomacy

In many ways, the focused themes of various literature on paradiplomacy-related phenomenon was synthesized by Alexander Kuznetsov in his recent work. (Kuznetsov 2015) He has summarized those works into eleven dimensions of paradiplomacy, which he further streamlines into an explanatory framework revolving around the following six questions (as shown in block font) and respective dimensions or approaches addressed to them (elaborated in regular font in following paragraphs subsequently) (Kuznetsov 2015: 50-51; 100-116)

What are the causes of the blooming of the Paradiplomatic activities of an examined region?

In general, there are at least 11 factors that are associated with increasing paradiplomatic activities: (1) globalization has eroded economic and cultural boundaries between states and granted subnational entities more opportunities to pursue their economic goals not only within their home locality but across national frontiers as well; (2) regionalization has led to the trend that drives toward subsidiarity, or the delegation of as much competence as possible from central government to local level of authorities in those spheres where the non-central units can perform more effectively.; (3) Democratization or transition from authoritarian systems to free regimes was often accompanied with a significantly increasing role of constituted local units in undertaking international affairs; (4) “Foreign policy domestication” and “internationalization of domestic politics”, or growing overlap between “domestic policy” and “foreign policy” and between “low politics” and “high politics”, were often associated with the blooming of paradiplomacy; (5) Federalization and decentralization could accelerate international engagement by constituent units; (6) problems with the nation-building process especially in multi-ethnic, linguistic or cultural societies could lead to assertive transnational networking by subnational units; (7) central government’s insufficient effectiveness in foreign relations could propel local units to take more initiatives to protect their own interests in international system; (8) asymmetry of constituent units could cause paradiplomacy in the sense that it often becomes a supplementary mechanism for the regions with high trade and industrial potential to promote its own economic development; (9) Paradiplomacy can be caused and fueled by the influence of external factors or outside stimulus such as foreign powers or international organization; (10) The personality of local leader

as well as the ideology of particular local political party can shape the intensity and course of subnational involvement in international affairs; (11) those regions that have a physical border with other countries instinctively have more passion and incentives to go abroad, in order to firstly settle some international cross- border related policy issues and communication.

What are the legal grounds of constituent diplomacy in the country of an examined subnational case?

This aspect of paradiplomacy contains two dimensions of questions: (1) what is the level of legal permission of treaty-making with foreign actors granted by the national constitutions/legal acts to local authorities?; (2) what are the constitutional requirements for consultations with subnational governments on foreign affairs issues, in the cases when those issues have a special impact upon a particular constituent unit or when the solution to the problem related to the international relations sphere totally or partly lies within the local legislative competence?

What is the predominant motive of the government of an examined region to be involved in international affairs?

Four motives are generally involved: (1) political goals are pursued in two ways: one is for secessionist regions aiming to gain their own statehood or at least a high autonomous status; The second group of regions performs politically in the international arena in the capacity of development promoters; (2) economic motivations lie in the desire of local authorities to reap maximum benefits from the world liberal market through interacting with foreign actors; (3) cultural or linguistic factors could also be vital incentives for paradiplomacy, especially for those regions who possess their own language, and cultural or religious peculiarities and are looking for cooperation first of all with foreign actors sharing a similar cultural and linguistic identity; (4) cross-border housekeeping function involves the need for subnational governments to find better solutions for routine but vital issues like the environment, transportation logistics, emergency management, education, or migration.

How has paradiplomacy been institutionalized in a given region (or substate)?

There are at least six ways of institutionalizing paradiplomatic activities: (1) a substate could create a separate special ministry or department which is responsible for handling international affairs of the constituent unit; (2) the subnational government could decide to open permanent subnational offices abroad; (3) local authorities' officials make visits to foreign regions and countries; (4) Substates could participate in various international events like exhibitions, forums that are organized by foreign actors; (5) Subnational governments could establish and participate in global and transborder multilateral regional networks and working groups on specific policy domains such as agriculture, sustainable development, energy, transportation; (6) local authorities could also participate in international events organized by foreign entities within the official delegation of their central government.

What is the attitude of the central government towards the paradiplomacy of its constituent entities?

The attitude of the central government towards paradiplomacy can be characterized by two general opposing perceptions: regarding it as (1) a challenge, or (2) an opportunity for the whole nation. Additionally, there is a practical dimension for the central government to respond that leads to four varying patterns. These include:

(3) cooperative-coordinated pattern where local governments involve in international relations under a formal or informal coordination with the federal government; (4) cooperative-joint pattern in which formal or informal inclusion of paradiplomacy within national foreign policy institution is arranged; (5) parallel-harmony pattern in which subnational governments act independently in the international arena in accordance with their competency, at the same time however, their actions are harmonized and do not contradict national foreign policy; (6) parallel-disharmony pattern where local authorities' external actions oppose national government policy, while the central government could not effectively harness subnational entities' performances in the international arena, which paradiplomacy essentially shifts toward diplomacy.

What are the consequences of paradiplomacy for the development of the whole nation?

Three possible consequences could be identified in this respect: (1) It leads to the rationalization of the national foreign policy. This could mean the practice of a pro-federalist principle of subsidiarity, based on which the central government should delegate to subnational authorities all those tasks that can be more effectively performed by the latter; (2) Paradiplomacy could carry a positive effect for national politics by bringing extra democratization and plurality in the decision-making of foreign policy process; (3) there is also a possibility for subnational diplomacy to forward ahead the centrifugal process that may lead to disintegration of the whole nation.

To sum up, Kuznetsov's framework above was developed to generalize overall paradiplomatic behavior and could be treated as a useful roadmap to analyze many empirical phenomena. That said, in this author's opinion, his scheme appears to downplay the importance for subnational actors of engaging paradiplomatic activities for the sake of policy learning from abroad per se. The reasons for engaging in policy learning and transfer could particularly be evident when multilateral networkings have been formed among subnational actors. Besides, although he did not specify the extent to which city diplomacy could be subsumed under this framework, there is no reason to completely exclude municipal actors from its application. Against this conceptual backdrop, what about city's multilateral networkings and especially the practice in Southeast Asia? How relevant is Kuznetsov's framework to the case of Southeast Asia? The paper will now turn to these two parts respectively.

Global and General-Oriented City Networking

As laid out in regard to question how has paradiplomacy been institutionalized in a given region (or substate) by Kuznetsov above, substates could institutionalize their paradiplomacy or transborder engagement in various ways: mainly partaking in international organizations and conference activities, establishing liaison offices abroad or special units within their administration specifically in charge for international cooperation and exchanges. As such, international organizations or associations, global or regional, serve as platforms for cities to undertake transborder engagement.

Recently, city networks in particular have often served as important platforms for municipal actors to come together to share, learn and get the necessary support (financial as well as moral) to build or expand their capabilities and projects. City networks, such as ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and C40 Climate

Leadership Group (C40) have also been presenting the collective positions of hundreds of cities, municipalities and local governments and advocating for a local agenda at international forums like UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UCSD) and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). They contribute to the preparatory processes for various UN conferences and regional meetings and are also accredited member of the UN Economic and Social Council.

There are numerous urban networks, global or regional, that could be identified. Benjamin Barber, for example, listed some major ones. (Barber 2013: 118-9) In this paper, three would be highlighted: C40, ICLEI and UCLG. All are global type of networks with universal memberships, whereas the former two are concerned with environmental and climate change issues, while the primary issues of the UCLG are not limited to environmental protection.

C40 Cities

C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (or simply C40 Cities) is a network of the world's megacities committed to addressing climate change. Connecting 94 global greatest cities and representing more than 700+ million citizens as well as one quarter of the global economy, it "supports cities to collaborate effectively, share knowledge and drive meaningful, measurable and sustainable action on climate change" to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and minimize climate risks in cities (C40 2019). It was founded in 2005 and headquartered at New York. As of November 2019, Mayor of Paris Anne Hidalgo has served as the C40's Chairwoman since 2016. Former Chairs of C40 Cities are: Rio de Janeiro Mayor Eduardo Paes (2013-2016), New York Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg (2010-2013), Toronto Mayor David Miller (2008-2010) and London Mayor Ken Livingstone (2005-2008).

It should be added that the action-oriented characteristics of the C40 Cities was highlighted by Mr. Eduardo Paes, its former Chair and also Mayor of Rio de Janeiro. In his speech in late 2013, he made it clear that "the C40 is focused not on talking but on concrete actions and to assist innovative projects and public policies to promote urban sustainable development." It "has shown the best way to lead is by example. In 2012, in a parallel event during the United Nations Summit Rio +20, C40 Mayors decided to reduce a combined 1.3 gigatons of carbon emissions in their cities by 2030 equivalent to the emissions of Mexico and Canada combined while national governments remained trapped in endless negotiations" (Paes 2013).

ICLEI

ICLEI is an international association of local governments and national and regional local government organizations that have made a commitment to sustainable development. It was established by 200 local governments from 43 countries in the aftermath of the 1990 World Congress of Local Governments for a Sustainable Future held at the UN headquarters in New York. World Secretariat operations began in 1991 in Toronto, Canada which was then moved to Bonn, Germany in 2010. It was built through the partnership of the UN Environment Program (UNEP), the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) and the Center for Innovative Diplomacy (CID). These three organizations reflect territorial complexity. They include a global governmental organization of States (UNEP), a global organization of local governments (IULA) and an NGO located in California (CID).

ICLEI has regional offices in Cape Town (South Africa), Tokyo, Jeju City (Republic of Korea), Freiburg (Germany), Buenos Aires, Toronto, Oakland, CA, Melbourne, Noida (India), and Manila. ICLEI has a World Congress every 3 years. It is a global network

of about 1,000 cities and local governments committed to sustainable development. ICLEI also describes itself as a 'movement working with national, regional and international networks', and 'a sustainable and environmental agency' strengthening and enabling local governments in implementing local and global climate action. It is governed by a Global Council based on nine regions with a three-year term of office and composed of all voting members of the Regional Executive Committees. The Global Executive Committee is elected from each Regional Executive Committee whose members are also elected by members of the Global Council (Alger 2011: 4-5).

In fact, the ICLEI is a network of networks and it is composed of a number of networks: a network of local governments that facilitates city-to-city cooperation; thematic networks that bring together cities leading the way on key sustainability issues like water quality and quantity, renewable energy, and urban disaster risk reduction; and a network of individuals, the leaders of their respective institutions. A selective list of these networks includes: Asian Cities Climate Change Resilience Network (ACCCRN), EcoCities Network, EcoMobility Alliance, Fast growing cities network, GreenClimateCities Network, Local Renewables network, Procura+ Exchange and World Mayors Council on Climate Change.

Overall, ICLEI's activities are organized around 10 agendas: (1) sustainable city; (2) resilient city; (3) biodiversity; (4) low carbon city; (5) resource-efficient and productive city; (6) smart city; (7) sustainable local economy and procurement; (8) happy, healthy and inclusive communities; (9) ecomobile city and (10) sustainable regions. These agendas form part of the recent Seoul Declaration and form the core of ICLEI's programs for its member cities.

UCLG

The oldest global network with general purpose and universal memberships was the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) which was founded in 1913 in Ghent, Belgium, with its headquarters later in The Hague. Its aims were to promote local autonomy, contribute toward improvement of local administration, study questions concerning life and activities of local authorities and welfare of citizens, promote the idea of participation of the population in civic affairs, and establish and develop international municipal relations. Federation Mondiale des Cities Unies (FMCU), headquartered in Paris, was formed with an agenda quite similar to IULA. Its goals included the promotion of the establishment of democratic local authorities, defending human rights, and contribution to sustainable urban development through decentralized cooperation and exchanges of experience. In 2001 an IULA-FMCU Unity Congress was held and in 2004 they merged into United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) with headquarters in Barcelona (Alger 2011: 3-4).

UCLG's program focuses on "Increasing the role and influence of local government and its representative organizations in global governance; becoming the main source of support for democratic, effective, innovative local government close to the citizen; ensuring an effective and democratic global organization. United Cities and Local Governments supports international cooperation between cities and their associations, and facilitates programs, networks and partnerships to build the capacity of local governments. It promotes the role of women in local decision-making, and is a gateway to relevant information on local government across the world" (Alger 2011: 4). UCLG's members include individual cities and State associations of local governments that represent all the cities and local governments in a single State. One hundred twelve Local Government Associations (LGAs) are members of UCLG, representing almost every existing LGA in the world. Over 1,000 cities across 95 States are direct members of UCLG. They represent over half of the world's total population.

Multilateral Networks and the Role of Southeast Asia Cities

Insofar as the three major city networks mentioned above, urban entities in Southeast Asia region did play some varying roles. To begin with, C40 Cities offer services, including: direct technical assistance, facilitation of peer-to-peer exchange and research, knowledge management and communications involving Southeast Asian cities. Its members in Southeast Asia are: Bangkok, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Quezon City and Singapore. As a matter of fact, there is no Chair coming from the region. Nor do any Southeast Asian cities serve as incumbent members of the Steering Committee or the Board of Directors. Nevertheless, Jakarta was listed as one of the Steering Committee. More importantly, in implementing its goal, C40 Cities did collaborate with development aid agencies and cities concerned that evidently involved the participation of the region. For example, on June 28, 2018 Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) signed a memorandum of cooperation (MOC) with the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (C40) to promote and carry out cooperative activities related to climate change in megacities in Southeast Asia.

The MOC promotes cooperative activities between JICA and C40, particularly in megacities in Southeast Asia, the heart of the region's rapid population and economic growth. Just as C40 is pursuing various climate change projects in Southeast Asia, so is JICA working on climate change in the region through key projects, such as technical cooperation to develop and implement a Climate Change Master Plan (2013–2023) in Bangkok, and to survey greenhouse gas inventories and develop a measurement, reporting and verification system in Ho Chi Minh City. Both agencies are thereby supporting climate actions and institutional development at the municipal level, and with the MOC in place, JICA plans to cooperate with C40 in implementing these projects, and the MOC will also facilitate future climate capacity-building activities in the region (JICA 2018).

The city of Yokohama has a close relationship with the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) and has been supporting various training courses for BMA staff since 2009. The City of Yokohama also cooperated with the BMA to in formulating the Bangkok Master Plan on Climate Change 2013–2023. The Master Plan aims to reduce GHG emissions by 13.57% from Business as Usual levels in four key sectors by 2020: transport, energy, solid waste/wastewater management, and urban greening. The mid-term review completed in May this year showed steady improvement. GHG emissions in 2016 were 2.55% less than those recorded in 2013 and 8.71% lower than BAU levels in 2016. Another project aims to mitigate traffic congestion by optimizing the timing of the traffic lights based on traffic data gathered from a number of zones in Bangkok. In the field of energy efficiency, efforts have been made to reduce GHG emissions by cutting down energy consumption in buildings. The BMA also switched to LED lighting and a more energy-efficient air conditioning system to make its buildings eco-friendlier. Such energy-saving measures will be expanded to other public buildings, such as ward offices, schools and hospitals. In total, the BMA is currently working on 46 priority projects based on the Master Plan. In the field of waste management, the C40-JICA-Yokohama-BMA collaboration is embodied by a project that aims to convert heat generated from waste incinerators into power. It also has a project that will plant 100,000 trees throughout Bangkok over a two-year period starting in May 2019 (JICA 2018).

Secondly, as of November 2019, there are 60 Southeast Asian members in the ICLEI, which include municipal, provincial actors as well as LGAs. In terms of the regional number of individual members in the ICLEI, they are 13 from Indonesia, 7 from

Malaysia, 37 from the Philippines, and 3 from Thailand. In leadership, Stephany Uy-Tan, Councilor of Catbalogan, the Philippines, is serving as the Vice President in Global Executive Committee of the ICLEI.¹ In terms of regional leadership, Mr. Bima Arya, Mayor of Bogor, Indonesia, is placed in Regional Seat of Southeast Asia in Global Executive Committee of the ICLEI (ICLEI n.d). Moreover, Ms. Mary Jane Ortega, former Mayor of San Fernando, the Philippines, had served as Vice President in 2012-2015 (ICLEI n.d). Overall, the capacities of serving in managerial team of the network evidently indicate more active role played by Southeast Asian members.

Thirdly, with respect to the UCLG, leadership also signals the role Southeast Asian cities play in the organization. In particular, the composition of the governing body of its Asia Pacific regional branch 2018-20 testifies to the importance the various local players have made significant contribution to the operation of the whole network. To be specific, Ms. Tri Rismaharini is one of UCLG Vice-Presidents and the incumbent President of the UCLG-ASPAC section. She is also representing Southeast Asia sub-region in the organization while serving as Mayor of Surabaya City. In addition, Ms. Stephany Uy-Tan is serving as one of Co-Presidents who represent Women in Local Government while concurrently acting in the capacity of the Mayor of Catbalongan City, the Philippines. In Southeast Asia sub-region of the UCLG-ASPAC, the leaders of five national LGAs are collectively in charge. They are: SAY KOSAL (President of the National League of Local Councils), AIRIN RACHMI DIANY (Chairman of the Association of Indonesian Municipalities and Mayor of South Tangerang), VO THI HONG ANH (President of the Association of Cities of Vietnam), MARDANI H. MAMING (Chairman of the Indonesian Regencies Government Association) and MAP SARIN (President of the National Association of Capital and Provincial Councils) (UCLG 2019, 12-13).

The active influence of Indonesia’s city governments within the UCLG-ASPAC could be demonstrated by the disclosure of the first flagship entitled “LOCALISE SDGs: Mobilising Indonesia’s Local Governments for Sustainable Development” that was featured in its Annual Report 2018. In it, UCLG ASPAC, together with the Government of Indonesia and its partners, made an inroad towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) “aiming specifically at localizing SDGs in 16 provinces and 14 cities throughout the country’s main archipelagos” (UCLG 2019, 18 - 19).

In terms of members, the UCLG-ASPAC is composed of the following 42 entities:¹¹

National Association of Capital and Provincial Councils (NACPC)	National League of Local Council (NLC)	Banda Aceh City	Batam City Government	Bengkulu City	Bogor City
Cimahi City	Council of Riau Island Province	East Kalimantan Province	Indonesian City Councils Association (ADEKSI)	Indonesian Municipalities Association (APEKSI)	Indonesian Provincial Government Association (APPSI)

¹ According to bio introduction in the ICLEI website, Stephany Uy-Tan became the first woman Mayor of Catbalogan in 2013. Since then, Mayor Uy-Tan represented ICLEI at international events such as the Climate Summit of Local and Regional Leaders in Bonn in November 2017. At the COP21 Cities and Regions Pavilion, Mayor Uy-Tan presented Catbalogan’s transformative Sky City project, in the framework of the Transformative Action Program. Please see: <https://iclei.org/en/leadership.html>

Indonesian Regencies Government Association (APKASI)	Indonesian Regency Councils Association (ADKASI)	Jakarta Capital City Government	Jambi City	Lubuklinggau City	Pangkal Pinang City
Probolinggo City	Salatiga City	Singkawang City	South Tangerang City	Surabaya City	Surakarta City
Wakatobi Regency Government	Yogyakarta Government	Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia Association of Local Authorities (MALA)	Petaling Jaya	Baguio City
Catbalogan City	Iriga City	League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP)	League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP)	Makati City Government	Philippine Councilors League City
Surigao City	Vigan City	Bangkok Metropolitan Adm (BMA)	Association of Cities of Vietnam (ACVN)	National Municipal League of Thailand (NMT)	Hanoi City

Besides the three global city networks, CityNet is perhaps the most well-known and “the largest association of urban stakeholders committed to sustainable development in the Asia Pacific region” (Citynet n.d). The process of its formation began with a regional Congress of Local Authorities for the Development of Human Settlements in Asia and the Pacific. It was held in 1982 in Yokohama, Japan, under the sponsorship of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), UNHabitat, and the City of Yokohama. The Congress stressed the need to enhance co-operative links between local authorities for the development of human settlements and to promote partnership with other urban stakeholders. To address these issues, the Congress adopted the Yokohama Declaration. A follow-up Congress in Nagoya, Japan in 1987 established the CityNet, which had its first Congress in 1989 in Yokohama (Alger 2011: 7). From 24 members at its inception in 1987, CityNet has grown to include over 135 municipalities, NGOs, private companies and research centers.

Last but not the least, noteworthy is the recent establishment of an ASEAN initiated city network, ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN). The formation process could be outlined as follows: At the 32nd ASEAN Summit on 28 April 2018, the ASEAN Leaders established the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN). The ASCN is a collaborative platform where cities from the ten ASEAN Member States (AMS) work towards the common goal of smart and sustainable urban development. The 26 ASCN Pilot Cities are: Bandar Seri Begawan, Battambang, Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, Makassar, Banyuwangi, DKI Jakarta, Luang Prabang, Vientiane, Johor Bahru, Kuala Lumpur, Kota Kinabalu, Kuching, Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Yangon, Cebu City, Davao City, Manila, Singapore, Bangkok, Chonburi, Phuket, Da Nang, Hanoi, and Ho Chi Minh City (ASEAN n.d).

It was formally set up in light of the opportunities and challenges posed by rapid urbanization with primary goal being to improve the lives of ASEAN citizens, using technology as an enabler. The first ASCN Governance Workshop was held from 22 to 25 May 2018 in Singapore, and was attended by delegates from the AMS, including the ASCN National Representatives, Chief Smart City Officers, and accompanying officials, the ASEAN Secretariat, as well as various government and private-sector agencies from ASEAN's external partners. The Workshop provided a venue for the ASCN members to draft their Smart City Action Plans (SCAPs) with guidance from experts, discuss the ASEAN Smart Cities Framework (ASCF), and network with external partners.

The Inaugural Meeting of the ASCN was held on July 8, 2018 in Singapore, and the opening ceremony was graced by Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Singapore. At the Meeting, the ASCN endorsed the ASCF and the SCAPs for the 26 pilot cities. The ASCF was adopted by the Leaders at the 33rd ASEAN Summit in mid-November 2018 in Singapore (ASEAN n.d).

Conclusion

This paper first maintained that city diplomacy could be examined within the broader context of transborder engagement by substates. This was demonstrated within the institutionalization of paradiplomacy which was epitomized by Alexander Kuznetsov, although he did not specifically refer to city diplomacy. The importance of practicing city diplomacy through multilateral networking was explicitly highlighted by Rio de Janeiro Mayor Eduardo Paes when he was chosen as the Chair of C40 Cities in 2013: "By engaging in City Diplomacy, mayors and city officials exchange information and experience. They facilitate the spread of new technologies and access to innovative public policies. Creative ideas and projects in one city can be replicated in another, and that exchange of knowledge is taking place, far from lengthy and politically charged treaties" (Paes 2013).

It was further shown that Southeast Asia cities and some of their leaders have played vital parts in both global such as C40 Cities, ICLEI and UCLG, as well as some region-oriented local government networks, including CityNet and ASCN. This part was demonstrated through the composition and distribution of memberships as well as leaderships. Nevertheless, more detailed analyses should be made in the future in exploring some particular country cases by incorporating the explanatory framework laid out by Kuznetsov. Besides, how and in what way institutions or norms may come into play in shaping the operation or sustainability of those city networks should be explored in the future so that elaborative city diplomacy in the region could be unfolded with more complete picture.

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