Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Vol 25, No 1, 2026, pp. 171-186
DOI: 10.14710/jis.25.1.2026.171-186
Website: https://ejournal.undip.ac.id/index.php/ilmusos

Original Article

ASEAN security analysis on transnational money laundering crimes: Formal commitments and practical implementation limitations

Qory Fizrianti Beru Sitepu [1*], Mergera Akbar Sinergi Putra Agung[1]

[1] Department of International Relations, Universitas Indonesia, Depok, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: qoryfizrianti@gmail.com

Article Info

Article history:
Received Oct 28th, 2025
Revised Jun 30th, 2026
Accepted Jul 19th, 2026
Published Jul 31st, 2026

Keywords:
ASEAN; ASEAN Way; Constructivist Security Community; Money Laundering Norms; Regional Governance

Abstract

Money laundering is a transnational crime that directly threatens economic stability and regional security in Southeast Asia. Although ASEAN has established formal commitments and cooperative forums to enhance cross-border law enforcement, money laundering activities in the region continue to rise. This article examines how ASEAN's shared norms and collective identity influence the effectiveness of its Anti-Money Laundering (AML) governance. Drawing on the Constructivist Security Community framework, this study analyses the interplay among the ASEAN Way, technocratic institutional culture, and voluntary compliance in shaping regional AML governance. Theoretically, this article demonstrates that the Constructivist Security Community framework offers explanatory depth that prevailing interest-based approaches cannot provide, as such frameworks treat compliance as a function of institutional design rather than normative internalisation. Empirically, this article is among the first to apply Acharya's tripartite framework to AML governance in ASEAN, revealing how the ASEAN Way produces symbolic compliance as a structurally embedded outcome rather than an incidental enforcement failure. The findings indicate that non-interference and consensus-building norms, while effective at preventing political conflict, simultaneously shape the trajectory of legal and monitoring mechanism development. ASEAN’s elite-driven identity formation limits public engagement and collective accountability, producing a weak sense of ownership among member states. Regional socialisation remains largely procedural, characterised by information sharing rather than structural reform. Consequently, ASEAN’s AML efforts reflect symbolic compliance, with formal commitments coexisting alongside limited domestic transformation. This article concludes that effective AML governance requires ASEAN to evolve from consensus-based coordination toward normative and institutional integration.

How to Cite (APA Style): Sitepu, Q. F. B. & Agung, M. A. S. P. (2026). ASEAN security analysis on transnational money laundering crimes: Formal commitments and practical implementation limitations. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, 25*(1), 171-186. https://doi.org/10.14710/jis.25.1.2026.171-186

INTRODUCTION

Transnational crime is an act that is criminalised by the laws, norms, and agreements of two or more mutually consenting countries (Bassiouni, 1983). One type of transnational crime that threatens national security and regional stability is money laundering (Gibbs et al., 2010). In this case, Southeast Asia is a region with a high risk of money laundering because these activities are complexly linked to other transnational crimes (UNODC, 2015). Money laundering activities in the region not only have profound regional implications but also impact global security and stability (UNODC, 2024).

Since 1996, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has recognised money laundering as a severe form of transnational crime in the region (UNODC, 2024). This is evidenced by the casino centres scattered across Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam, which are the root of money laundering activities in the region. There are 57 legal casinos in Cambodia and 28 legal gambling facilities in Vietnam that offer financial services, including the issuance of cheques in financial transactions (UNODC, 2015). In 2023, the seizure of assets worth US$2.8 billion, or around Rp43 trillion, in Singapore was also one of the most significant cases in the region related to money laundering (CNN Indonesia, 2023). Furthermore, the Global Organised Crime Index reports that Myanmar and Laos are among the countries with the highest levels of money laundering worldwide, with indices of 2.00/10.00 and 3.50/10.00 in 2023, due to weak regulations and minimal coordination between agencies (FATF, 2023).

The urgency of addressing money laundering is also outlined in the ASEAN Political-Security Community Strategic Plan 2045, which links money laundering to the financing of transnational crime as a whole, including cybercrime and the use of illegal digital assets (ASEAN, 2025). The document outlines ASEAN’s strategic plan to reaffirm its commitment to strengthening information exchange, cross-border cooperation, and the integration of financial surveillance systems, including those involving digital technology, demonstrating ASEAN’s seriousness in combating money laundering as part of transnational crime (ASEAN, 2025). In addition, ASEAN has the ASEAN Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) to assist in the investigation, prosecution, and adjudication of cross-border money laundering cases (Efendi, 2018; Simanjuntak et al., 2019). This is also supported by various high-level meetings held to discuss the importance of enhanced information exchange, capacity-building, and cross-border cooperation through the ASEAN Ministerial Meetings on Transnational Crime (AMMTC), Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC), East Asia Summit, and the ASEAN Anti-Money Laundering & Fraud Virtual Conference (ASEAN, 2017, 2021).

Despite these efforts, the implementation of ASEAN measures to combat money laundering is still far from optimal (Caballero-Anthony, 2014). This is evidenced by the prevalence of money laundering activities in member countries, such as a 79% increase in money laundering cases in Singapore in 2023, a 91.9% increase in suspicious transactions in Indonesia in 2024, and the seizure of $37 billion in assets in 2023 through various illegal activities, including money laundering in Myanmar, Cambodia, and Laos (East Asia Forum, 2024; UNODC, 2024; Tanner, 2024). In addition, a report by the Basel Institute on Governance (2022) states that five ASEAN member countries—Myanmar, Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia—are included in the list of countries with high levels of money laundering worldwide (Kunaratnam, 2022). The indicators in the report are based on the quality of anti-money laundering frameworks, terrorist financing activities, corruption risks, financial transparency and standards, public transparency and accountability, and legal and political risks (Kunaratnam, 2022).

Based on these facts, ASEAN still faces obstacles in implementing and effectively enforcing formal commitments that underpin the design of various cooperation frameworks related to money laundering (Acharya, 2014). ASEAN’s weakness in tackling money laundering as a form of transnational crime not only reflects issues of institutional capacity or regulatory gaps, but is also closely related to the basic characteristics of the regional organisation (Caballero-Anthony, 2014; Rüland, 2018). Based on this, it is important to examine more deeply the role of norms and shared identity in ASEAN as an institution that prioritises ideas, beliefs, history, and regional values in shaping regional cooperation on money laundering. ASEAN's norms and shared identity, which focus on political harmonisation and conflict avoidance, are considered insufficient to internalise law-enforcement norms within a strong, binding cooperation mechanism to address the threat of transnational crime.

The gap between ASEAN's formal commitments and practical implementation raises an important question about how far regional norms and identities influence policy performance. Therefore, it is necessary to review the existing literature to examine how scholars have discussed the diffusion of international norms and the formation of ASEAN's regional governance in the context of money laundering. Studies on money laundering issues in Southeast Asia have developed in various approaches, but most still emphasise legal and institutional governance aspects rather than the normative and socio-political dimensions that shape ASEAN cooperation. Thus, this section reviews the relevant literature to understand the extent to which ASEAN has internalised international norms on money laundering prevention and established regional security governance through collective mechanisms.

The first dominant approach in this study is the legal approach. Early studies highlighted that money laundering was seen as a cross-border crime that required joint legal mechanisms at the regional level. The establishment of the ASEAN Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) in 2004 was an important milestone for cross-border law enforcement cooperation in ASEAN (Efendi, 2018; Simanjuntak et al., 2019). Under this agreement, member states can assist each other in investigations, prosecutions, and the enforcement of court decisions in money laundering cases. However, Nguyen (2012) asserts that the ASEAN MLAT is not yet entirely grounded in international norms, so differences often condition the form of coordination in legal systems, evidentiary procedures, and the absence of binding sanction mechanisms.

As the issue of global financial crime has developed, a governance approach has emerged that views money laundering not only as a criminal problem but also as a threat to economic stability and national development. Baker and Milne (2015) argue that anti-money laundering regulations in Southeast Asia serve to maintain financial stability and institutional legitimacy in the region. ASEAN then adopted the principles outlined by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) to strengthen financial surveillance and expand the financial intelligence network (Omar et al., 2015; Wong, 2013). However, the effectiveness of these regulations depends on each country's domestic capacity. A study by Omar et al. (2015) shows that a significant gap persists between international standards and their implementation at the national level, due to weak supervisory institutions, political instability, and low public awareness of financial transparency issues. A related study by Sitepu (2025) further demonstrates that the diffusion of international AML norms within ASEAN tends to follow a gradual and non-linear pattern, in which member states adopt the discourse of global standards without necessarily transforming domestic enforcement practices.

From a domestic political perspective, the literature highlights variations in the implementation of international norms among ASEAN member countries. Makmur (2024) found that Indonesia's policy in combating money laundering focuses more on the formal financial sector than on informal remittance flows, which are actually prone to abuse. Meanwhile, research by Tran (2020) and Nguyen (2014) shows that Vietnam is more responsive to international norms due to intense external pressure from the FATF and the Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG). Both institutions encourage Vietnam to strengthen transparency in its financial system and improve compliance by financial institutions with anti-money laundering regulations. These findings indicate that external pressure and reputational incentives often have a greater influence than a country's internal motivations in strengthening financial governance.

In addition, several studies show that ASEAN has made significant progress in regional cooperation to combat cross-border money laundering. Fabe and Romaniuk (2023) highlight increased legal cooperation, capacity-building programmes, and intelligence-sharing mechanisms that are part of ASEAN's collective agenda in tackling transnational crime. Forms of crime such as terrorism financing, human smuggling, and illegal wildlife trade are priority areas that are directly correlated with money laundering practices (Croissant & Barlow, 2007; Yuliantiningsih et al., 2023). However, the institutional characteristics of ASEAN, based on consensus and non-intervention, mean that this cooperation remains coordinative rather than integrative.

Based on several categories in these studies, there are two significant gaps. First, the extant legal and governance literature treats AML compliance as an output of institutional design, overlooking the constitutive role of shared norms and collective identity in enabling or constraining enforcement capacity (Acharya, 2014; Ba, 2019). Second, constructivist IR studies of ASEAN regionalism have not been applied systematically to financial crime governance, leaving a significant lacuna in understanding how the ASEAN Way operates as a structural constraint on AML effectiveness (Jetschke & Lenz, 2013).

The extant legal and governance literature treats AML compliance primarily as an output of institutional design, focusing on the adequacy of regulatory frameworks, the quality of supervisory mechanisms, and the degree of alignment with FATF recommendations (Hameiri & Jones, 2015; Sharman, 2011). While this body of work has produced valuable insights into the structural gaps in ASEAN's AML architecture, it systematically overlooks the constitutive role of shared norms and collective identity in enabling or constraining enforcement capacity—treating compliance as a technical problem amenable to regulatory solutions rather than a socially constructed outcome shaped by the region's normative foundations (Acharya, 2014; Ba, 2019). As a consequence, existing studies can document the persistence of implementation gaps but cannot adequately explain why those gaps endure despite decades of formal commitments and repeated institutional reform.

A second gap lies within constructivist IR scholarship on ASEAN regionalism. Although this literature has produced theoretically rich accounts of how the ASEAN Way shapes regional identity, norm localisation, and socialisation processes (Acharya, 2001, 2014; Rüland, 2018), its application has remained concentrated on political-security and human rights domains. Financial crime governance has not been subjected to systematic constructivist analysis, leaving a significant lacuna in understanding how the ASEAN Way operates as a structural constraint on AML effectiveness rather than merely a diplomatic style (Caballero-Anthony, 2014; Jetschke & Lenz, 201). This absence is consequential: without a socio-normative account of how regional identity and shared norms shape the boundaries of acceptable cooperation, the pattern of formal commitment without substantive enforcement remains analytically underexplained.

This article addresses both gaps by offering an analytical perspective on ASEAN's AML governance that has not been developed in the existing literature. Rather than examining compliance through a regulatory or institutional lens, this study explores how the region's foundational normative commitments shape the boundaries of collective action against financial crime. Overall, no prior study has systematically examined ASEAN's AML governance through a socio-normative framework centred on shared norms, collective identity, and regional socialisation, making this article among the first to offer a structural explanation for the region's persistent compliance gap from this perspective.

This contribution is significant for two reasons. Theoretically, it extends sociomoral analysis into the governance domain of financial crime, where such approaches remain underdeveloped, thereby broadening the explanatory scope of constructivist scholarship beyond its conventional political-security applications. Empirically, it provides a more complete account of why ASEAN member states continue to maintain formal AML commitments without corresponding domestic transformation. This is especially consequential at a time when money laundering in Southeast Asia is increasing in scale and complexity, and when the adequacy of ASEAN's cooperative response is being scrutinised by international bodies including the FATF and APG (FATF, 2023; UNODC, 2024). Without a theoretically grounded account of the normative constraints shaping regional governance, policy recommendations risk addressing symptoms rather than the structural conditions that reproduce them.

Moreover, this article is divided into five sections. The first section introduces the background on the urgency of money laundering in Southeast Asia, the formulation of the problem, the previous studies, and the main argument. The second section explains Amitav Acharya's Constructivist Security Community Framework, which is used to analyse ASEAN's shared norms and identity. The third section outlines the research method, which employs a qualitative descriptive approach through analysis of ASEAN official statements, policy documents, and international reports. The fourth section discusses shared norms, shared identity, and regional socialisation to demonstrate ASEAN's limited role in creating a region that is safe and stable from money laundering. Finally, this article concludes with the research findings.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Constructivist security community theory

The Constructivist Security Community theory is a constructivist approach that holds that material interests and rational incentives are insufficient to explain the formation of a security community (Acharya, 2014). A security community is built on mutual trust, shared identity, and collective norms that can prevent conflict in the region. This security community is an important pillar in maintaining regional stability, especially in fostering a peaceful, conflict-free environment (Acharya, 2014). The formation of shared norms can be achieved by emphasising peaceful resolution, non-intervention, and dialogue. These norms help develop a shared identity by framing a conflict as a common threat, thereby shaping a community's response to it (Acharya, 2001).

The security community approach emphasises regional security as the result of rational calculations of national interests, social interactions, the construction of a shared identity, and the internalisation of certain norms within the region (Acharya, 2001). Importantly, ASEAN's identity as a security community is not a fixed institutional achievement but an ongoing discursive construction, shaped by competing interpretations of security among elites and subject to continuous contestation across different governance domains (Martel, 2022). Therefore, the formation of a security community is understood in terms of three main components: shared norms, collective identity, and regional socialisation. These three components play an important role in promoting mutual trust and prioritising common interests to create a stable, secure, and sustainable region (Acharya, 2001).

First, shared norms include rules, values, and practices adopted by member states to prevent the use of violence and to guide their behaviour (Acharya, 2001). Second, collective identity refers to social trust and mutual recognition that arise from shared experiences, history, and values, thereby building regional cohesion (Acharya, 2001). In this case, the commitment of member states is crucial, given that cooperation on priority issues can escalate into cross-border conflicts that threaten domestic and regional stability (Acharya, 2001). Finally, regional socialisation involves routine interaction between countries through formal and informal practices that can shift a country's orientation from self-help to community-based security (Acharya, 2001).

Constructivist Security Community framework holds that regional cooperation is shaped not by material incentives or rational design but by intersubjective meanings, shared identities, and socialisation processes (Acharya, 2001). This is precisely what is at stake in ASEAN's AML governance: the ASEAN Way functions not as a formal institutional rule but as a constitutive normative framework that shapes what kinds of cooperation are considered legitimate and appropriate. Unlike approaches that privilege rule architecture and cost-benefit calculations, this framework captures the 'why' behind states' behavioural choices—for instance, why ASEAN member states voluntarily limit enforcement mechanisms even when doing so contradicts their declared security interests. It also accounts for the process of norm internalisation over time, distinguishing between states that merely perform compliance and those that have genuinely embedded regional norms into domestic governance structures.

Furthermore, the framework is sensitive to the role of identity construction and elite socialisation in reproducing institutional inertia—dynamics that remain invisible to analytical lenses focused solely on formal outputs such as treaties, declarations, or organisational mandates. The three analytical components—shared norms, collective identity, and regional socialisation—therefore provide operational categories that enable systematic tracing of ASEAN's AML mechanisms from norm adoption to implementation outcome. This constructivist lens is theoretically superior not only because it explains the mechanism of symbolic compliance, but because it reveals compliance as a socially constructed and institutionally reproduced pattern rather than a technical failure awaiting a procedural remedy.

Using this analytical framework, this article will explore how shared norms, collective identity, and the process of regional socialisation influence ASEAN's obstacles in its efforts to prevent money laundering. This article will also discuss the extent to which these three components internalise member states' commitment to cooperation and collective efforts in ASEAN's mechanisms for combating money laundering. Thus, this article aims to understand the complexity of social interactions, identity construction, and the socialisation of norms in building cohesive and stable regional security.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative research design with a deductive approach to examine how ASEAN's shared norms, collective identity, and regional socialisation processes shape the effectiveness of its anti-money laundering (AML) governance. This design is appropriate given the study's focus on interpreting institutional behaviour, normative patterns, and policy language within a specific regional context, rather than measuring quantifiable outcomes (Bryman, 2012; Neuman, 2014). The unit of analysis is ASEAN as a regional institution, examined through its formal policy outputs and inter-state cooperation mechanisms related to AML governance across the period 1997 to 2024. This timeframe was selected purposively, as it spans ASEAN's initial securitisation of transnational crime through the most recent institutional developments reflected in SOMTC and FATF reports up to 2024.

Data were collected from two categories of sources. Primary data consist of official ASEAN documents, including declarations, blueprints, ministerial statements, and SOMTC annual reports that explicitly address money laundering. Secondary data are drawn from reports by international organisations such as FATF, APG, UNODC, and the Basel Institute on Governance, as well as peer-reviewed academic studies on ASEAN's transnational crime governance. Data selection was purposive, prioritising materials that directly reflect ASEAN's institutional response to money laundering as both a normative and security governance issue.

The study applies narrative content analysis to trace how ASEAN's normative architecture is constructed and reproduced through institutional language (Bryman, 2012). The analytical framework is grounded in Acharya's (2001) Constructivist Security Community tripartite indicators: shared norms are assessed through the presence of non-intervention and consensus language, the absence of binding enforcement clauses, and the degree to which global AML standards are adopted substantively rather than symbolically; collective identity is assessed through patterns of elite-driven decision-making, the absence of public accountability mechanisms, and the declaratory versus legally binding character of ASEAN AML documents; and regional socialisation is assessed through the frequency and formality of inter-state AML forums, the existence of peer review or mutual evaluation mechanisms, and observable evidence of behavioural change versus symbolic participation.

To strengthen the reliability and validity of the analysis, triangulation is applied across multiple document types and institutional reports drawn from distinct organisational sources, including ASEAN's own official declarations and SOMTC annual reports, technical evaluation reports issued by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG), risk assessment indices produced by the Basel Institute on Governance, and criminological data from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), thereby ensuring that the interpretive conclusions are not reliant on any single institutional perspective (Bryman, 2012).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Within this framework, the analysis will focus on the social, political, and institutional dynamics that influence ASEAN's effectiveness in addressing the threat of money laundering. The Constructivist Security Community theory emphasises the importance of social construction through shared norms, collective identity, and socialisation processes in shaping patterns of regional interaction and cooperation (Acharya, 2001; Adler & Barnett, 1998). Therefore, in the context of ASEAN's effectiveness, tackling money laundering cannot be separated from the constrained development of shared norms, a weak collective identity, and a low level of regional socialisation. Despite formal commitments and policy initiatives agreed upon at the regional level, the socio-political dynamics shaping the region reveal resistance to the internalisation of norms and a weak sense of community in addressing money laundering as a transnational crime (Caballero-Anthony, 2014; Rüland, 2018).
Furthermore, this discussion and analysis section seeks to elaborate on the role of each component in explaining the constraints shaping ASEAN's capacity as a regional security community to form effective collective mechanisms to address money laundering.

Shared norms

Shared norms refer to agreed-upon formal rules or practices. They are also related to the cognitive basis that influences how countries think about and interpret interactions with one another. In this case, the cognitive basis plays a role in forming a shared framework of thinking or shared understandings through social interaction, collective learning, and the internalisation of values (Acharya, 2001). The cognitive basis also serves as a collective repository of key ideas deemed appropriate and logical in light of cultural and historical conditions, in response to security and threats (Rüland, 2018). This article assumes that ASEAN has a standard norm, namely the ASEAN Way, as a starting point in defining and formulating comprehensive security on the issue of money laundering.

The ASEAN Way consists of key norms, such as non-intervention and non-confrontation (Pradityo, Sidiq, & Kurniawan, 2021). In this case, the principle of non-intervention plays a significant role, as it is designed to reduce the potential for conflict among member states and to strengthen security and stability in the face of subversive threats (Jones, 2012). Furthermore, the principle of non-confrontation is an instrument for resolving disputes among member states peacefully (Goh, 2000). This norm is divided into three aspects, namely comfort level, defence cooperation, and closed identification of threats (Acharya, 1998). These three aspects serve as benchmarks for assessing the diplomatic approach and the success of negotiation cooperation in ASEAN multilateral efforts to handle conflicts.

The ASEAN Way encourages ASEAN to adopt a perspective that is oriented towards internal threats, so that ASEAN countries become the leading actors in defining security (Dewitt, 1994; Caballero-Anthony, 2004). Through this concept, ASEAN security and stability can be achieved if domestic stability prevails in member countries, primarily through economic and social development, as part of national resilience. Therefore, the issue of money laundering is important for ASEAN because it is a strategic concern related to the internal stability and security of member countries and the region as a whole (Hameiri & Jones, 2015).

However, the ASEAN Way as a standard norm has several fundamental weaknesses in addressing money laundering. First, the principle of non-intervention, one of the main pillars of the ASEAN Way, shapes ASEAN's preference for non-binding supervisory arrangements. This has led member countries to prioritise domestic sovereignty over building coordinated regional cooperation in tackling cross-border crimes such as money laundering (Acharya, 2001; Caballero-Anthony, 2014). Second, the absence of a coercive oversight mechanism conditions the scope and pace of case reporting and information exchange, making it difficult to detect and enforce the law against increasingly complex money laundering activities involving international networks (Sharman, 2011). This can be seen in the role of ASEAN Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) as voluntary, non-legally binding ASEAN financial intelligence exchange institutions, resulting in cautious, full-consensus exchanges of financial intelligence information—a pattern consistent with the broader tendency of ASEAN to preserve informality as its preferred modality in regional security governance, even as non-traditional security challenges demand more binding cooperative arrangements (Emmers, 2003; Rüland, 2000; Koga, 2022).

In addition, the ASEAN Way tends to emphasise political stability and harmony among member states, so that sensitive issues such as money laundering are often avoided in substantive discussions. The principle of non-confrontation constrains ASEAN's capacity to press member states that engage in money laundering practices (Goh, 2000). This has resulted in a lack of impetus to establish binding legal instruments for comprehensive cross-border financial supervision. In this regard, ASEAN has several Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties (MLATs) that are not universal in scope. Hence, obstacles to legal cooperation due to differences in legal systems and the voluntary nature of financial supervision mechanisms in these agreements render these mechanisms ineffective in preventing regional money laundering (Caballero-Anthony, 2014).

The normative nature of the ASEAN Way also produces an illusion of stability (Sharman, 2011). The stability achieved is more political in nature, maintaining diplomatic relations and preventing open conflict than substantive, namely, building effective governance to address cross-border threats. In the context of money laundering, these norms tend to emphasise diplomatic formalities and avoidance of criticism of member states' domestic policies (Ba, 2009; Haacke, 2003). As a result, cross-border law enforcement or policy evaluation is often delayed due to lengthy consultation processes and reliance on complete consensus (Haacke, 2003). On the other hand, this approach creates a form of symbolic compliance, characterised by member states' formal adherence to regional commitments without significant real change at the domestic level (Sharman, 2011).

In ASEAN's case, the ASEAN Way does not merely limit enforcement capacity; it actively shapes the boundaries of what member states perceive as institutionally acceptable (Acharya, 2014; Rüland, 2018). The mechanism operates through three observable steps. First, when external AML norms enter the regional arena through FATF recommendations and APG mutual evaluations, ASEAN member states do not reject them outright. Instead, the ASEAN Way's cognitive logic filters these norms selectively: principles compatible with existing regional values, such as capacity-building and information-sharing, are absorbed into the regional framework, while those that conflict with non-intervention and sovereignty are systematically excluded (Acharya, 2004; Sharman, 2011). This selective absorption is not a failure of institutional design but a predictable consequence of a normative architecture that prioritises regional cohesion over regulatory integration.

Second, the norms that survive this selective process are institutionalised in a form that preserves their symbolic value while neutralising their enforcement potential. ASEAN declarations and ministerial statements adopt the language of international AML standards, but translate these commitments into voluntary, consensus-based arrangements without legal obligation or sanction mechanisms (Ba, 2019; Caballero-Anthony, 2014). The result is a set of formal instruments that signal normative alignment to the international community while insulating domestic governance from external scrutiny.

Third, this performative compliance is reproduced through regional socialisation processes that reinforce rather than challenge the existing normative order. Because ASEAN's cooperative forums are structured around consensus and closed elite deliberation, they provide no mechanism for norm contestation, critical evaluation, or accountability feedback (Jetschke & Lenz, 2013). States that maintain weak AML frameworks face no peer pressure within the regional architecture; instead, their participation in symbolic forums is treated as sufficient evidence of commitment. Over time, this reproduces a regional normative environment in which formal compliance and substantive enforcement are systematically decoupled (Acharya, 2001; Ba, 2019).

The phenomenon of formal adherence to regional commitments in anti-money laundering cooperation is evident in the gap between policy adoption and implementation effectiveness in various ASEAN countries. Based on the 2023 Basel AML Index report, five ASEAN countries—Myanmar, Cambodia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia—are in the high-risk category with an average score of 5.67 out of 10, indicating weak financial supervision and law enforcement against money laundering activities (Basel Institute on Governance, 2023). This pattern of high-risk scores is not attributable to random institutional failure, but reflects a causally traceable outcome of ASEAN's normative architecture. Because the ASEAN Way renders binding peer evaluation mechanisms normatively unacceptable, member states face no regional accountability pressure to close the gap between formal AML commitments and domestic implementation. This reflects a broader pattern in which global AML standards are formally adopted but selectively implemented, as the ASEAN Way's emphasis on regional solidarity renders coercive oversight mechanisms institutionally incompatible with its foundational normative commitments (Basel Institute on Governance, 2023; Sharman, 2011).

The 2023 Financial Action Task Force (FATF) report also explains that the effectiveness of Indonesia's Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing (AML/CTF) framework has only reached a level of 'moderate effectiveness', while Laos and the Philippines remain on the FATF watch list (grey list) for failing to meet global standards in reporting suspicious transactions and coordination between law enforcement agencies (FATF, 2023). On the other hand, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reports that between 2021 and 2023, the number of suspicious financial transactions in Southeast Asia increased by nearly 80%, yet only about 10–15% of these led to formal investigations (UNODC, 2024). This enforcement gap is causally traceable to the structural design of ASEAN's AML socialisation process. Because regional socialisation within ASEAN occurs primarily through voluntary, consensus-based forums such as the AMMTC and SOMTC, without binding reporting obligations or follow-up mechanisms, the normative pressure to act on intelligence data remains weak and asymmetric across member states. Countries with stronger domestic institutions, such as Singapore and Malaysia, maintain higher investigation rates. At the same time, states with weaker regulatory capacity—Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia—remain below the regional threshold precisely because the ASEAN Way's non-coercive architecture provides no mechanism to elevate their compliance (FATF, 2023; Jetschke & Lenz, 2013; UNODC, 2024).

Furthermore, shared norms in the ASEAN Way also shape a pattern of selective and adaptive diffusion of international norms (Acharya, 2014; Rüland, 2018). In response to global pressure on money laundering issues, ASEAN adopted a cooperation framework issued by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) (Hameiri & Jones, 2015). However, the adoption process was tailored to the region's internal characteristics. Instead of integrating these norms comprehensively, ASEAN made limited adaptations, emphasising national flexibility and the principle of voluntary compliance, with adherence to specific standards without legally binding enforcement mechanisms or sanctions (Ba, 2019). This creates an asymmetrical pattern of norm diffusion, where member states accept global values only to the extent that they do not conflict with domestic interests and internal political stability. As a result, ASEAN has not achieved strong policy convergence in addressing cross-border financial crime, mainly due to the lack of mechanisms that encourage substantive compliance at the national level (Ba, 2019).

This evidence points to a situation in which, although ASEAN countries have established national financial intelligence units and enacted AML/CTF laws in line with the international framework, their implementation remains symbolic. Regulations are created to demonstrate compliance with global norms rather than to reflect the internalisation of substantive law-enforcement values. Thus, the gap between the formal framework and implementation practices illustrates how the ASEAN Way reinforces the tendency to maintain political stability and an image of compliance, rather than efforts to promote real change at the national level necessary to effectively combat cross-border financial crime (Ba, 2009; Caballero-Anthony, 2014). Without precise evaluation mechanisms and transparency of information, ASEAN's efforts to establish financial security governance remain symbolic and unsustainable. As a result, ASEAN is also considered to have failed to build a collective sense of urgency about the dangers of money laundering, which threaten regional economic stability and security (Naylor, 2002).

Shared identity

A shared identity is built through historical experiences, cultural values, and collective interests, shaping a shared consciousness and sense of belonging among the actors involved. Therefore, shared identity is not fixed or given, but instead is formed through social interaction, the construction of shared meaning, and continuous socialisation processes, resulting in a sense of responsibility and shared goals (Sharman, 2011). In the context of ASEAN, shared identity is weak and technocratic, especially in the area of money laundering. ASEAN developed the idea of the ASEAN Security Community (ASC) as a political-security community, which later developed into the ASEAN Political Security Council (APSC) (ASEAN, 2003; Jones, 2012).

The process of forming ASEAN's political-security was more sociocultural and normative, without the creation of supranational legal institutions capable of regulating member states' behaviour in concrete terms (Acharya, 2001). ASEAN was also considered to lack a collective identity that would encourage decisive action against money laundering, as public discourse was not involved in decision-making. It is in line with the distinctive character of the ASEAN Way, which prioritises closed, elite meetings, so that institutional decision-making is conducted through consensus among the elites of these countries (Acharya, 2004; Rüland, 2018). In this regard, the ASEAN Way's diplomatic norms are not fixed or uniformly understood, but are actively constructed and contested through elite-level practice, reinforcing patterns of institutional behaviour that privilege government-to-government processes over inclusive regional governance (Martel & Glas, 2023). The absence of public discourse or open deliberation therefore indicates not merely a functional adaptation, but a structurally reproduced preference that consistently marginalises non-state actors and public accountability from ASEAN's security decision-making (Acharya, 2004).

Several key ASEAN meetings demonstrate the consistency of this functional pattern. First, the 2nd AMMTC meeting in Yangon in June 1999 was a closed meeting among ministers and established the 1999 Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime, which explicitly listed money laundering as a priority issue (ASEAN, 1999). Then, the Work Programme to Implement the ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime (2002–2007), produced by the 4th AMMTC forum in Kuala Lumpur, was organised through a bureaucratic mechanism among countries (ASEAN Secretariat, 2012). Subsequently, the 11th SOTMC, the 8th AMMTC, the ASEAN-Japan Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime, and the 2nd ASEAN Plus Three SOMTC meetings were held in Bali in 2011. These meetings emphasised the importance of enhanced information exchange, capacity-building, and cross-border cooperation conducted in closed technical forums between senior officials of member countries (ASEAN, 2021). In addition, the East Asia Summit Leaders' Declaration on Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism, adopted in 2017 in Manila, was conducted at the head-of-state level through a closed diplomatic framework without a feedback mechanism from non-state stakeholders (ASEAN, 2017). Finally, the ASEAN Anti-Money Laundering & Fraud Virtual Conference in 2023 involved actors from the financial sector and limited private regulators without public oversight or civil society organisations.

These meetings show that ASEAN does not yet have binding joint legal instruments, so that ASEAN's collective identity on money laundering issues remains weak and fragmented (Naylor, 2002; Sharman, 2011). Most of these meetings are symbolic and ceremonial, without producing concrete steps toward legal integration or substantial regulatory harmonisation. For example, the 1997 ASEAN Declaration on Transnational Crime contains only general statements on the importance of cross-border cooperation in tackling transnational crime, without specifying a time frame, evaluation mechanisms, or indicators of success. Subsequent documents, such as the 1999 Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime, did add money laundering as a priority issue. However, the recommended actions were still limited to 'enhancing cooperation and information sharing' without any reporting obligations or sanctions for non-compliant countries. Furthermore, the Work Programme to Implement the ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime (2002–2007) also did not establish uniform technical or legal standards among member states, but instead encouraged voluntary initiatives through the establishment of national focal points. An internal ASEAN evaluation in 2009 showed that only four of the ten member states consistently submitted follow-up reports on the programme: Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines (ASEAN Secretariat, 2009). Similarly, the 2009 ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Blueprint and the 2025 APSC Blueprint refer to money laundering as part of "emerging security challenges," but do not produce a regional legal framework such as the mutual evaluation mechanism or peer review process implemented by the FATF.

In addition, the AMMTC and SOMTC regularly issue Joint Statements and Chairman's Statements that are declarative in nature. For example, the Joint Statement of the 14th AMMTC in 2022 emphasised the importance of strengthening intelligence data exchange and building the capacity of financial institutions. However, it did not impose legal obligations on member states to implement it at the national level. In fact, the 2023 ASEAN SOMTC report stated that the implementation of inter-agency cooperation recommendations remains voluntary and dependent on domestic legislation. Thus, there is no mechanism to monitor compliance and ensure consistency between regional commitments and field implementation.

Similar weaknesses are also evident in the 2012 ASEAN Declaration on the Prevention and Combating of Corruption and the 2017 ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Anti-Money Laundering and

Countering the Financing of Terrorism. Both documents affirm support for international norms regulated by the FATF and the United Nations Vienna Convention 1988, but only emphasise the principle of coordination without legal harmonisation. There has been no effort to establish a binding ASEAN Financial Intelligence Framework between countries, so the exchange of financial intelligence data remains ad hoc and dependent on bilateral relations (UNODC, 2024).

Therefore, the documents produced within the framework of ASEAN cooperation on money laundering are generally declaratory in nature, without any development of legal harmonisation measures (Caballero-Anthony, 2014; Emmers, 2003). This has led member states to prioritise domestic interests over building a collective commitment to combating cross-border crime. The absence of binding legal instruments reinforces the explanation that ASEAN's collective identity on money laundering issues has not developed into a substantive commitment, but merely reflects efforts to maintain institutional legitimacy in the eyes of the international community.

Furthermore, the weak shared identity of ASEAN is also reflected in the lack of public awareness and civil society involvement in shaping the regional policy agenda. A 2023 survey by the ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute shows that only 22.3% of respondents in Southeast Asia consider ASEAN to play a 'significant role' in combating corruption and cross-border financial crime, while 47.8% say ASEAN has 'no real influence' on the issue (ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute, 2023). Furthermore, the 2022 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report, People for 2030: ASEAN Development and Governance Index, states that public trust in ASEAN decision-making mechanisms is below 40% in almost all member countries. The ASEAN Public Participation Index also stands at 0.37 on a scale of 1, well below the European Union at 0.68 and the African Union at 0.52 (UNDP, 2022). These findings reinforce the argument that ASEAN has failed to build a strong regional identity in the face of non-traditional security challenges such as money laundering. This also shows that ASEAN's identity has not yet transformed into a collective consciousness among the public, but is still managed at the government and bureaucratic levels.

Regional socialisation

Regional socialisation is defined as a shared practice, through repeated interaction and institutionalisation, that involves the formation of collective identity and a sense of togetherness (Acharya, 2001). This socialisation occurs through dialogue forums, inter-bureaucratic interaction, information exchange, and the institutionalisation of norms in regional agreements. In the context of ASEAN's money laundering, regional socialisation is carried out without deeper coordination, resulting in symbolic, formal socialisation without substantive implementation, supervision, or structural changes (Jetschke & Lenz, 2013). There are three aspects of ASEAN regional socialisation in tackling money laundering: political commitment, oversight mechanisms, and normative actors who are consistent in their conduct of regional socialisation (Caballero-Anthony, 2014).

First, ASEAN's political commitment includes countries' willingness to harmonise their national policies with agreed regional norms and standards. However, the ASEAN policy-making process is still influenced by sensitivities regarding national sovereignty and non-intervention, leading member countries to prefer voluntary actions that are not legally binding to avoid affecting domestic affairs. This is also related to weak political will to consolidate operational collective norms, resulting in minimal willingness among state actors to adopt and practise shared values in national policies (Acharya, 2001, 2014). It can be found on the AMMTC forum from 2023. All member countries affirmed their support for strengthening financial intelligence data exchange, but none agreed to establish a joint task force mechanism.

The decision not to establish a joint task force mechanism widens the gap between political commitment and substantive implementation. Without a joint investigative framework, the results of data exchange in the AMMTC forum tend to be symbolic, lacking verification mechanisms or legal follow-up. The 2024 UNODC report notes that although the volume of financial intelligence data exchange in Southeast Asia increased by 34% between 2020 and 2023, only about 12% of these reports led to cross-border investigations or asset seizures (UNODC, 2024). This situation also shows that ASEAN still relies on ad hoc bilateral coordination and external pressure from the FATF and APG (FATF, 2023; APG, 2023). As a result, ASEAN regional socialisation on money laundering issues remains procedural and reactive, serving more as a symbol of political legitimacy than a collective learning process capable of changing institutional behaviour at the national level (Jetschke & Lenz, 2013). This is further evidenced by the nature of socialisation within ASEAN's diplomatic community, which produces overlapping but bounded identities that reinforce procedural participation rather than deep normative internalisation, ultimately narrowing the transformative potential of regional forums on issues such as financial crime governance (Glas & Martel, 2024).

Second, ASEAN's monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are reflected in weak monitoring system capacities, such as peer reviews of situational reports and consultative forums without sanctions. The absence of these monitoring mechanisms reflects the character of ASEAN as more of a soft institutionalism (Stubbs, 2008) because political agreements do not automatically result in concrete implementation actions. This can be seen in the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint 2025, which serves as a reference for cross-border cooperation on money laundering and includes qualitative achievement indicators. The ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint 2025 only lists indicators such as “increased cooperation” or “enhanced information exchange” without clear measures of success. Data from the ASEAN SOMTC Annual Report 2023 also shows that of the 68 proposed cross-border cooperation projects, only 27, or 39.7%, were realised, with most being technical training or capacity-building rather than substantive policy reforms (ASEAN, 2023).

Furthermore, the ASEAN SOMTC only produces annual situation reports and does not provide binding evaluations or recommendations. The 2023 SOMTC report noted that 72% of the cross-border cooperation recommendations from previous AMMTC forums had not been followed up on at the national level, particularly those related to anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing (ASEAN, 2023). This limitation arises because the SOMTC lacks a mandate to evaluate the performance of member countries' policy implementation, but serves only as a forum for information exchange and policy updates. Data from the FATF in 2023 also shows that only four ASEAN countries consistently report Suspicious Transaction Reports (STRs) to international cooperation networks—namely Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines—while other countries such as Myanmar and Laos report less than 20% of the total suspicious transactions identified by domestic financial institutions (FATF, 2023; UNODC, 2024). This indicates that the ASEAN regional socialisation process remains top-down, technocratic, and procedural, with policies formulated at a high bureaucratic level and lacking horizontal oversight between countries.

Finally, the success of regional socialisation depends on the presence of consistent normative actors, namely actors able to serve as normative leaders, shaping the policy agenda, voicing the importance of issues, and conducting regular socialisation with member states (Acharya, 2001). In this case, ASEAN lacks a strong internal supranational institution, and the role of civil society in the regional policy process is limited, thereby constraining the conditions under which normative leadership can emerge. The absence of a regional authority with the legitimacy and capacity to promote the internalisation of norms makes the regional socialisation process in ASEAN sporadic and dependent on each country's domestic interests (Stubbs, 2008). Although countries with relatively more established institutional capacities, such as Singapore and Malaysia, could potentially take on the role of normative leaders in promoting anti-money laundering, these countries tend to avoid this position due to concerns about political resistance from other member countries that are more sensitive to issues of sovereignty and intervention (Jetschke & Lenz, 2013). In addition, external institutions such as the APG play a more dominant role in facilitating the dissemination of anti-money laundering norms in the region than ASEAN itself. According to the APG Typologies Report 2023, 70% of regional training and technical programmes on financial intelligence sharing in Southeast Asia are organised by the APG and UNODC, rather than by ASEAN (APG, 2023).

The absence of internal normative leadership and precise coordination mechanisms has made the dissemination of anti-money laundering norms in ASEAN reactive rather than proactive. ASEAN tends to adapt to external pressures rather than developing its own internal norms and mechanisms. This reinforces the symbolic and elitist nature of socialisation, in which interactions between countries occur at a high bureaucratic level without substantive transformation in domestic law enforcement practices. Thus, the ASEAN regional socialisation process on money laundering issues has not developed into a collective learning mechanism that encourages behavioural change among member states, but instead remains a means of reproducing formal norms to maintain institutional legitimacy at the international level.

CONCLUSION

This article analyses the factors driving the increase in money laundering activities in the region. It uses the Constructivist Security Community Theory to explain that ASEAN’s weak implementation of anti-money laundering measures is not only due to technical or institutional constraints but also rooted in the social and normative dimensions of the institution. The main findings show that shared norms, such as the ASEAN Way, actually shape ASEAN’s ability to establish effective oversight and law enforcement mechanisms. In addition, ASEAN’s technocratic and exclusive collective identity does not create a strong sense of collective responsibility in addressing the urgency of money laundering as a transnational crime. Finally, the ASEAN regional socialisation process is symbolic and elitist, thus failing to substantively internalise anti-money laundering norms at the national level within member states.

To realise a security community responsive to money laundering, ASEAN needs to transform its approach from diplomatic efforts to policy consolidation oriented towards transparency and accountability. The author observes that tackling money laundering cannot be separated from the need for a system of openness and effectively coordinated information exchange mechanisms. Therefore, concrete steps are needed to strengthen transparency in financial reporting, public access to suspicious transaction data, and increased interoperability between member states’ financial intelligence agencies. Regional coordination must also be expanded through cross-sector forums that involve not only state actors but also regulators, the private sector, and civil society to build a responsive and credible collective surveillance system. Without strong transparency and coordination, ASEAN’s formal commitments will continue to face implementation gaps, constraining the region’s capacity to combat money laundering effectively.

REFERENCES

Acharya, A. (1998). Culture, security, multilateralism: The “ASEAN way” and regional order. *Contemporary Security Policy,* 19(1).

Acharya, A. (2001). *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order*. London: Routledge.

Acharya, A. (2004). How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter? Norm Localization and Institutional Change in Asian Regionalism. *International Organization*, *58*(2), 239–275.

Acharya, A. (2014). *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Adler, E., & Barnett, M. (1998). *Security Communities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

ASEAN. (1999). *ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime*. https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/ASEAN-Plan-of-Action-in-Combating-TC_Adopted-by-11th-AMMTC-on-20Sept17-1.pdf

ASEAN. (2003). *The Tenth ASEAN Regional Forum*. https://asean.org/speechandstatement/chairmans-statement-the-tenth-meeting-of-asean-regional-forum/

ASEAN. (2017). *East Asia Summit Leaders' Declaration on Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism*. https://asean.org/east-asia-summit-leaders-declaration-on-anti-money-laundering-and-countering-the-financing-of-terrorism/.

ASEAN. (2021). *International Economic Crime, Money Laundering Overview*. https://asean.org/our-communities/asean-political-security-community/peaceful-secure-and-stable-region/international-economic-crime-money-laundering/.

ASEAN. (2023). *Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime Annual Report*. https://asean.org/senior-officials-meeting-on-transnational-crime-somtc/.

ASEAN. (2025). *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future*. https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/ASEAN-2045-Our-Shared-Future.pdf.

ASEAN Secretariat. (2009). *Assessment Report on the Implementation of the Work Programme to Combat Transnational Crime (2002–2007)*. Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat.

ASEAN Secretariat. (2012). *ASEAN documents on combating transnational organized crime and terrorism*. ASEAN Secretariat.

Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG). (2023). *Annual Typologies Report 2023*. https://www.apgml.org/news/2023-apg-typologies-report.

Ba, A. D. (2009). *(Re)Negotiating East and Southeast Asia: Region, Regionalism, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)*. Stanford University Press.

Ba, A. D. (2019). Understanding ASEAN's Resilience: Norms, Identity, and Institutional Flexibility. *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, *41*(3), 352–374.

Baker, B., & Milne, S. (2015). Dirty money states: Illicit economies and the state in Southeast Asia. *Critical Asian Studies, 47*(2), 151–176.

Basel Institute on Governance. (2023). *Basel AML Index: Ranking Money Laundering Risks*. https://baselgovernance.org/basel-aml-index.

Bassiouni, C. M. (1983). The Penal Characteristics of Conventional International Criminal Law. *Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law, 15*, 27-38.

Bryman, A. (2012). *Social research methods (4th ed.).* Oxford University Press.

Caballero-Anthony, M. (2004). Revisioning human security in Southeast Asia. *Asian Perspective*.

Caballero-Anthony, M. (2014). Understanding ASEAN's centrality: Bases and prospects in an evolving regional architecture (RSIS Working Paper No. 277). S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies.

CNN Indonesia. (2023). *Singapura Bongkar Kasus Pencucian Uang Terbesar, Sita Aset Rp43,6 T*. https://www.cnnindonesia.com/internasional/20231003132617-106-1006524/singapura-bongkar-kasus-pencucian-uang-terbesar-sita-aset-rp436-t.

Croissant, A., & Barlow, D. (2007). Following the Money: Transnational Crime and Money Laundering in East Asia. *Asian Journal of Political Science*, *15*(2), 159–183.

Dewitt, D. (1994). Common, comprehensive, and cooperative security. *The Pacific Review*, 7(1).

East Asia Forum. (2024). *Indonesia moves to become a millionaire magnet*. https://eastasiaforum.org/2024/08/27/indonesia-moves-to-become-a-millionaire-magnet/.

Efendi, L. S. (2018). Cross–Border law enforcement against money laundering suspects in south east asia nations (ASEAN) through "Mutual legal assistance" and its interaction to ASEAN Economic Community. *IOP Conference Series Earth and Environmental Science, 175(*1), 1-4.

Emmers, Ralf. (2003). ASEAN and the securitization of transnational crime in Southeast Asia. *The Pacific Review*, 16(3).

Fabe, J., & Romaniuk, S. N. (2023). Norm Diffusion and Security Governance in Southeast Asia. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, *54*(2), 301–318.

Financial Action Task Force (FATF). (2023). *Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Risks in Southeast Asia*. https://www.fatf-gafi.org.

Glas, A., & Martel, S. (2024). Boundary work, overlapping identities, and liminality in communities of practice: Diplomacy within and beyond ASEAN. *Global Studies Quarterly*, *4*(1).

Gibbs, C., McGarrell, E. F., & Axelrod, M. (2010). Transnational White-Collar Crime and Risk: Lessons from the Global Trade in Electronic Waste. *Criminology & Public Policy*, *9*(3), 543-560.

Goh, G. (2000). The 'ASEAN Way. *Pacific* Review, *13*(3), 439.

Haacke, J. (2003). *ASEAN's Diplomatic and Security Culture: Origins, Development and Prospects*. Routledge.

Hameiri, Shahar & Jones, L. (2015). Regulatory regionalism and anti-money-laundering governance in Asia. *Journal of International Affairs*.

ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute. (2023). *The State of Southeast Asia 2023 Survey Report*. https://www.iseas.edu.sg/centres/asean-studies-centre/state-of-southeast-asia-survey/the-state-of-southeast-asia-2023-survey-report-2/. Singapore: ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute.

Jetschke, A., & Lenz, T. (2013). Does regionalism diffuse? A new research agenda for the study of regional organizations. *Journal of European Public Policy, 20*(4). 626–637.

Jones, L. (2012). *ASEAN, Sovereignty and Intervention in Southeast Asia*. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan.

Koga, K. (2022). The ASEAN Way and the changing security environment: Navigating challenges to informality and centrality. *International Politics*, *60*(3), 521–541.

Kunaratnam, S. (2022). *Basel AML Index 2022: Ranking money laundering and terrorist financing risks around the world*. https://baselgovernance.org/publications/basel-aml-index-2022.

Naylor, R. T. (2002). *Wages of Crime: Black Markets, Illegal Finance, and the Underworld Economy*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Neuman, W. L. (2014). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches (7th ed.).* Pearson.

Makmur, R. (2024). Evaluasi Kebijakan Pemberantasan Pencucian Uang di Indonesia: Tantangan dan Implementasi. *Jurnal Keamanan dan Pembangunan Nasional*, *12*(1), 45–61.

Martel, S. (2022). *Enacting the security community: ASEAN's never-ending story*. Stanford University Press.

Martel, S., & Glas, A. (2023). The contested meaning-making of diplomatic norms: competence in practice in Southeast Asian multilateralism. *European Journal of International Relations*, *29*(2), 367–391.

Nguyen, T. (2012). Regional Cooperation in Money Laundering Prevention: The ASEAN Perspective. *Journal of Financial Crime*, *19*(4), 347–359.

Nguyen, T. (2014). Anti–Money Laundering Policy Implementation in Vietnam: Domestic Challenges and International Pressures. *Asian Journal of Criminology*, *9*(2), 91–109.

Omar, N., Johari, R. J., & Othman, R. (2015). Governance and Anti–Money Laundering Compliance in ASEAN Financial Institutions. *Journal of Money Laundering Control*, *18*(2), 183–202.

Pradityo, R., Sidiq, M. H. F., & Kurniawan, Y. (2021). Difusi Norma Kerja Sama Keamanan ASEAN Melawan Perdagangan Manusia. *Andalas Journal of International Studies*. *10*(2), 151–170.

Rüland, Jürgen. (2000). ASEAN and the Asian crisis: theoretical implications and practical consequences for Southeast Asian regionalism. The Pacific Review, *13*(3).

Rüland, Jürgen. (2018). *The Indonesian Way: ASEAN, Europeanization, and Foreign Policy Debates in a New Democracy*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Sharman, J. C. (2008). Power and Discourse in Policy Diffusion: Anti-Money Laundering in Developing States. *International Studies Quarterly*, *52*(3). 635-656.

Sharman, J. C. (2011). *The Money Laundry: Regulating Criminal Finance in the Global Economy*. Cornell University Press.

Simanjuntak, E. L., Naili, Y. T., & Samekto, F. A. (2019). Free movement of judgments in cross-border money laundering crimes: legal stance toward the asean legal integration. *Journal of East Asia and International Law, 12*(2), 373-386.

Sitepu, Q.F.B. (2025). Difusi Norma Kerja Sama Pencucian Uang ASEAN. *Jurnal Hubungan Internasional*, *18*(2).

Stubbs, R. (2008). The ASEAN alternative? Ideas, institutions and the challenge to 'global' governance. *The Pacific Review, 21*(4), 451–468.

Tanner, J. (2024). *Money laundering events in Singapore rose by 79% in 2023*. https://asianbankingandfinance.net/co-written-partner/sponsored-articles/see-full-picture-financial-crime.

Tran, T. A. (2020). Financial Transparency and Anti–Money Laundering Reforms in Vietnam. *Asian Economic Policy Review*, *15*(1), 99–117.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2022). *People for 2030: ASEAN Development and Governance Index 2022*. Bangkok: UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). (2015). *Cambodia, Thailand and Viet Nam target bulk cash smuggling and money laundering in the casino industry*. https://www.unodc.org/roseap/en/vietnam/2015/10/money-laundering/story.html.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). (2024). *Southeast Asian countries join the global fight against money laundering*. https://www.unodc.org/roseap/en/2024/09/southeast-asia-money-laundering/story.html.

Wong, L. (2013). Money-laundering in Southeast Asia: Liberalism and governmentality at work. *Contemporary Politics*, *19*(2).

Yuliantiningsih, A., Santoso, D., & Fadhila, R. (2023). Pencucian Uang dan Pendanaan Terorisme dalam Perspektif Kejahatan Transnasional di ASEAN. *Jurnal Keamanan Global*, *11*(3), 212–230.