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Araştırma Makalesi • Research Article

The Effect of Domestic Political Factors and Forces to the Foreign Policy Making in Indonesia

Endonezya'da İç Politika Faktörlerinin ve Güçlerinin Dış Politikaya Etkisi

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ÖZ

Bu araştırma, dış politika yapımında önemli etkiye sahip olan iç politik faktörleri ve güçleri incelemeyi ve Endonezya hükümetinin Rohingya davası ile ilgili olarak nasıl hedefler koyduğunu tespit etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Uluslararası ilişkiler alanındaki literatürde, akademisyenler tarafından bir ülkenin uluslararası politikasına atıfta bulunmak için kullanılan kavram dış ilişkiler siyaseti yerine dış ilişkiler politikasıdır. Rohingya ile ilgili konularda Endonezya, Güneydoğu Asya'yı (ASEAN) ilk stratejik ortam olarak görmektedir. ASEAN istikrarı için ele alınan konular, ASEAN istikrarsızlığının Endonezya'nın iç koşullarını da olumsuz yönde etkileyeceği göz önüne alınarak, Endonezya'nın dış politika öncelikleri arasında yer almaktadır. Endonezya, ASEAN üyeleri arasında eşitlerin birincisi sayılmaktadır ve bölgesel sorunların aşılmasında etkin rol alması beklenmektedir. Bu bağlamda uygulanmakta olan Endonezya dış politikası, iletişimsel ve yapıcı bir politikadır.

ABSTRACT

This research aimed to examine the domestic political factors and forces that have a significant effect on the foreign policy making and determine how the Indonesian government implements and sets targets to be achieved in relation to the Rohingya case. In various literature on international relations, the concept used by IR scholars to refer to a country's policy towards the international world is foreign policy instead of foreign politics. Regarding Rohingya issues, Indonesia considers Southeast Asia (ASEAN) as the first strategic environment. Issues bringing implications for ASEAN stability have become one of the Indonesian foreign policy priorities, given that ASEAN instability will also negatively affect Indonesia's domestic conditions. Indonesia is regarded as primus inter pares among ASEAN members and is highly expected to play an active role in overcoming regional issues. The Indonesian foreign policy implemented in this case is a communicative and constructive foreign policy.

1. Introduction

Foreign policy is the way a country articulates its national interest in the international world. Foreign policy, as stated by Chris Brown, is the result of interrelated policy-making processes that reflect domestic politics (Brown, 2005). Foreign policy is influenced by several important factors used as the considerations of decision makers in formulating policy options to be taken. These factors include economic,

political, strategic, and ideological interests as well as values adopted by the related community and country.

Indonesia, since the independence era, has adopted the principle of free and active foreign policy. This principle is a guide for elite policymakers in fighting for Indonesia's national interests in the international political system. This principle emphasizes independence in responding to the phenomenon of international politics and Indonesia's active

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role and contribution in promoting peace, security and stability at regional and global levels.

Southeast Asia, whose countries has an organization namely ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), is the first strategic environment in the Indonesian foreign policy. The region, since the recent three decades, has become one of the centres of international political attention, given its strategic position in global geopolitical and geo-economic discourses. The emergence of Indo-Pacific, emphasizing the importance of treating the Indian and Pacific Oceans as a geopolitical entity, places Southeast Asia as the centre of this concept (Medcalf).

Throughout 2016, two main issues developed dynamically in the ASEAN region, attracting the attention of international relation observers, elite policymakers, diplomats, legal practitioners, activists and journalists. The first issue was the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) on maritime disputes and island ownership in the South China Sea between Philippines and China. The decision of the International PCA released officially in July 2016 won the Philippine lawsuit against, stating that the nine-dash lines and historical rights claimed by China in the waters have no validity in international law (Panda, 2016).

The second issue that was also equally important as the South China Sea issue was the alleged human right violation of Rohingya ethnicity in Rakhine state, Myanmar. Myanmar also received international attention regarding democratization issues which began in 2011, marking the transition from the military junta authoritarian regime to democratic government. Although the political reform went well with the general election held in 2015, there has been no significant changes brought to the Rohingya issues. Rohingyas remain the object of violence carried out by extremists. The government intervention is also ineffective. Even, the security forces tend to be biased in dealing with the issues (Strategic Comment, 2014).

'Rohingya' is a controversial terminology in Myanmar. Despite being widely used by the international community, the terminology 'Rohingya' is not officially accepted or used by Myanmar. This terminology, according to the government and the understanding of the majority of Myanmar people, refers to Muslim immigrants from Bangladesh (Bengali Muslims) living in Rakhine. Moreover, the Rohingya is not included in the 135 ethnic groups recognized by the Myanmar government. Based on the 1982 citizenship law, there are three categories of population, namely citizens, associate citizens, and naturalized citizens (Kipgen).

This issue is also inseparable from the historical origins of controversial Rohingya ethnicity. Several academicians have argued that Rohingyas have settled in Myanmar for several centuries and are descended from Arab, Persian, Turkish, Mughal and Bengali Muslims who came as traders, soldiers, and scholars through land and sea routes

(Kipgen). Jacques Leider, a historian examining Rakhine, noted that the Muslim community settling in this area in the 15th century was most likely Persian and Indian mixture-blooded (Thwangmung, 2016). Meanwhile, the majority of Myanmar people have considered Rohingyas as Bengali Muslims from Bangladesh who settled in Rakhine since the Anglo-Burmese War in 1824-1826. Currently, the majority of Rohingya people occupying Rakhine are generally considered to have origins from South Asia who were deliberately brought in as workers by the British colonial government – East Indian Company (Strategic Comment, 2014). Also, it should be noted that Rohingya is not the only Muslim community in Myanmar. There are other Muslim communities in other states.

Whether or not Rohingyas are Rakhine native inhabitants is a central issue which has become a divisive point, especially between the elite Rohingya Muslims and the Buddhists as the majority in Myanmar. Thwangmung stated that the communal conflict between the Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims in Rakhine is caused by several factors. It not only includes distrust and fear of cultural differences, competition for land and resource control, and political reform providing space to describe frustrated expressions that are difficult to control. The more important thing considered as the basis of this conflict is the incomplete issue regarding the claimed legitimacy of Rohingya as a Myanmar's national ethnicity (tain-ying-thar) (Thwangmung, 2016).

The communal conflict making Rohingyas as the most disadvantaged party since the political reform in 2011 seems to be intensifying with a widespread escalation. In June 2012, riots between Rakhine Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims caused 200 people died and, according to the United Nations (UN)'s estimation, around 115,000 people, especially Rohingyas, lost their houses. The conflict resumed in October of the same year, where 32,000 people were displaced due to homelessness and 94 people (mostly Rohingyas) were killed. In this year, the Buddhist nationalist group (better known as 969) also emerged as an extremist movement with anti-Muslim rhetoric initiating to attack Muslims' houses, businesses, and mosques (Strategic Comment, 2014).

Again, such a conflict resumed in the following years, even involving both Myanmar and Rohingya security forces in October 2016. The riots stemmed from the Rohingya militants' attack against Myanmar police posts in the border area with Bangladesh. A total of 9 Myanmar security forces were killed in this attack. Myanmar authorities responded to this case by placing Rakhine under military supervision and evacuating thousands of people. According to the report of the London-based Burma Human Rights Network, a total of 30,000 people had to flee, leaving the ne da settlement.

The Rohingya issues have a significant impact on the ASEAN region. The regional countries, including Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and India, become the destinations of Rohingya refugees leaving

Myanmar. In certain cases, Rohingya refugees are also objects of human trafficking across national borders. Currently, Indonesia has accommodated 13,800 Rohingya refugees (Antara News, 2016). If the Rohingya case cannot be overcome by the regional countries through diplomacy, the flow of refugees from Myanmar, as stated by Coyne from Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), is able to quickly exceed the regional countries' refugee-accommodating capacity. With the estimated Rohingya people of 1.3 million, the potential crisis of mass migration is an inevitable fact. The 2015 conflict resulting in 25,000 people fleeing from Myanmar has also caused a crisis in three ASEAN countries – Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. In this case, prevention measures are crucial to take in order to avoid experiencing the same thing as the European Union in dealing with the flow of Middle East refugees in 2015-2016 (Coyne, 2016).

Some observers have suggested that the issue of violence against Rohingya ethnicity continuing to occur repeatedly with an increasing escalation potentially strengthens radicalization and terrorism in the future. The tendency for terrorism began to emerge in 2013 when Bodh Gaya – a temple and site where Buddhists were enlightened – was attacked on July 7 in which the Mujahideen Indians were considered as the group responsible for the attack. Anti-Buddhist sentiments have spread widely in South Asia and Southeast Asia since 2012 when the Rohingya crisis began to be known by the international community. Tehrik-e-Taliban, a Pakistani militant group, has asked the Pakistani government to close its embassy in Myanmar and break off the diplomatic relation with the country as a form of solidarity to Rohingyas. In 2013, there was also an attack on a Buddhist temple in Jakarta amid widespread anti-Buddhist sentiments linked by the government to the Rohingya issue based on information about the meeting of two members of RSO (Rohingya Solidarity Organization) with radical groups in Indonesia (Strategic Comment, 2014).

Indonesia considers Southeast Asia (ASEAN) as the first strategic environment. Issues bringing implications for ASEAN stability have become one of the Indonesian foreign policy priorities, given that ASEAN instability will also negatively affect Indonesia's domestic conditions. Indonesia is regarded as *primus inter pares* among ASEAN members and is highly expected to play an active role in overcoming regional issues. It is because Indonesia is always present with various ideas and diplomatic initiatives to solve and mitigate regional issues, such as the South China Sea conflict and the conflict between Thailand and Cambodia on border disputes. Indonesia also plays an important role in encouraging the democratization process of the military junta in Myanmar (The Jakarta Globe).

Rohingya issues are challenges for Indonesia and ASEAN. For ASEAN, these issues show the principle of ineffective non-intervention in solving regional issues. The context of contemporary international relations is extremely different from the cold war era. The use of the ineffective non-

intervention principle by ASEAN becomes irrelevant in overcoming the complexity of contemporary issues. The failure of ASEAN in dealing with Rohingya issues will also have an impact on ASEAN's effectiveness in overcoming other issues such as the South China Sea conflict involving four ASEAN countries and China (Nugroho). Similarly, Indonesia's success in handling Rohingya issues will further strengthen Indonesia's position as the natural leader for ASEAN. If Indonesia fails due to inactions in taking a stand and policy related to the issues, ASEAN will face a humanitarian crisis stretching from Rakhine to the archipelago waters, as reminded by John Coyne (2016).

In November 2016, the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Retno Marsudi, visited Myanmar to meet Aung San Suu Kyi to channel humanitarian aids to Rohingya people in Rakhine state. Since the conflict emerging in October 2016, the Myanmar government has limited the distribution of international aids and the access of international organizations to Rohingyas. Retno stated that Indonesia would take intensive diplomacy in overcoming Rohingya issues, one of which was by bridging communications between Myanmar and Bangladesh governments (The Jakarta Post, 2017). As a country directly bordering with Myanmar, Bangladesh has a central role in dealing with the humanitarian crisis occurring in Rakhine (The Jakarta Post, 2016). This also does not rule out the possibility of Indonesia to take the multilateral diplomacy path through ASEAN or particular bodies formed to handle Rohingya issues such as Rakhine Advisory Group.

This research is one of the few studies analyzing the Indonesian foreign policy towards Myanmar in the issue of Rohingya. Based on the description of the background above, the interesting point, in this case, is the Indonesian foreign policy in addressing the Rohingya case on Myanmar. This case has implications for the regional stability of ASEAN, given that most Rohingyas are refugees in several regional countries such as Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. Even, at certain levels, this case has increased the potential for radicalization and terrorism. This case is a challenge for ASEAN in responding to human rights violations and for Indonesia as the largest democratic country with the largest Muslim population in ASEAN that upholds the respect for human rights as a value in the nation and state life. Therefore, this research aimed to examine the domestic political factors and forces that have a significant effect on the foreign policy making and determine how the Indonesian government implements and sets targets to be achieved in relation to the Rohingya case.

2. Literature Review

This research used the decision-making theory developed by Graham Allison. Allison employed three models to understand the foreign policy of rational actors, organizational processes, and government politics more widely known as a bureaucratic model (Bendor, 1992). In the rational actor model, state behavior is described as a

rational individual actor who is assumed to have perfect knowledge of a situation and tries to maximize any values and objectives based on the situation. Various state actions are analyzed by assuming that the state considers all options and acts rationally to maximize profits. In this model, the government becomes the main actor examining a set of objectives, evaluating them based on profits, and choosing one of the policy options considered providing the highest return (Hara, 2011). As for the organizational model, decision makers work with limited information and time and do not look for an optimal solution. They involve in doing certain behavior just to satisfy and try to find solutions accordingly with a set of objectives and minimize the risk of failure. Government bureaucracy limits actions and often determines final decisions. Meanwhile, in the bureaucratic model, state actors try to achieve separate objectives that might be opposite each other. In this case, individuals representing various organizational interests get involved in the process of achieving joint decisions being argued which will later become official state policies. According to Allison, this model is the best. The actions of a country are best understood as a result of the politicking and negotiation of its top leaders. Even if the top leaders have a common goal, they still differ in the way of achieving it due to some factors, such as personal interests and backgrounds. Likewise, the reason making these leaders do politicking is that they have different levels of power based on charisma, personality, persuasion skills, and personal relations with decision makers. In analyzing the Indonesian foreign policy on Rohingya issues in Myanmar, this research emphasizes the bureaucratic model in explaining the Indonesian government's policy options.

3. Research Methodology

This research was designed in the form of qualitative research. The type of this research is library research. According to Danzin and Lincoln (Danzin), qualitative research has its own rights. According to Straus and Corbin (1997), qualitative research findings cannot be obtained through statistical procedures or other measurement methods. Qualitative research can involve cross-disciplinary, cross-study field and cross-problem approaches. However, there is a complexity possibly emerging in qualitative research, that is interrelationships of various terms, understandings, concepts, and assumptions.

The qualitative method was selected based on the reason that the studied nature and problems required further searches, not limited to visible symptoms. This method can be more flexibly used to uncover and analyze things behind limited-known symptoms. This method can also be used to clarify the details of complex problems that cannot be expressed by quantitative methods. Qualitative research can provide meaning to phenomena while quantitative research is more oriented to efforts of proving hypotheses.

Since the type of this research is library research, it used no specific location. This research was conducted in various

libraries where the researcher possibly collected data and information needed.

As mentioned earlier, this study used a qualitative method with a descriptive analysis model aimed to describe the research problems using various variables influencing the problems qualitatively. With this method, this research did not use a particular sample but used certain groups of data accordingly to the variables and indicators. The data in this research were sourced from secondary data which can be in the form of literature, either books, scientific texts, journals, documents, and other publications related to the problems studied. The secondary data were obtained through libraries, institutions, and individuals providing information and data needed.

This research also applied a phenomenological analysis model – a description of phenomena or symptoms related to the problems under study. Phenomena can be in the form of events, situations, experiences or concepts.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. History and Development of Rohingya Issues

Rohingya people were first present in Myanmar as an immigrant community living in an independent kingdom in Arakan currently known as Rakhine state in Myanmar (Mahmood, 2016). Rohingya, the majority ethnicity in Myanmar at present, is indeed not a native ethnicity of Myanmar. Rohingya ethnicity derives from South Asia. At that time, there was no country and government established as the current Myanmar nation-state, just like the Arabian and Chinese ethnicities in Indonesia before and after the founding of the Unitary Republic of Indonesia, the Javanese-Malay ethnicity in Suriname, or the Malay ethnicity spreading across Southeast Asia.

Rohingya people, at that time, could live peacefully in Arakan. The Arakan Kingdom established a good relationship with the Bengal Kingdom through the spread of Islam and trade routes. Issues began when the King of Burma Kingdom, Bodawpaya, conquered Arakan and hundreds of thousands of refugees fled to Bengal (Mahmood, 2016). Here is the timeline description of the history and development of Rohingya ethnicity in Myanmar.

A British diplomat sent to help refugees, Hiram Cox, founded the city of Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh, where many Rohingyas still live today. Then, after Britain captured Burma (currently known as Myanmar) and made it a province in British India, workers migrated to Burma from other parts of British India for infrastructure projects.

In 1942 when World War II took place, Japan invaded Burma, pushing out the British. As the British retreated, Burmese nationalists attacked Muslim communities whom they thought had benefited from British colonial rule. After the World War ended, in 1945, Britain liberated Burma from Japanese occupation with the help of Burmese nationalists

led by Aung San and Rohingya fighters. However, after that, Rohingyas felt betrayed as the British did not fulfil a promise of autonomy for Arakan. That is where conflicts began to occur.

Table 1: Timeline of History and Development of Rohingya Ethnicity in Myanmar

Year	Events
8 th century	The Rohingya, people from South Asia, dwelled in an independent kingdom in Arakan (currently known as Rakhine state in modern Myanmar).
9-14 th century	The Rohingya came into contact with Islam through Arab traders. Close ties were forged between Arakan and Bengal.
1784	The King of Burma Kingdom, Bodawpaya, conquered Arakan and hundreds of thousands of refugees fled to Bengal.
1790	A British diplomat sent to help refugees, Hiram Cox, established the town of Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh, where many Rohingyas still live today.
1824-1942	Britain captured Burma (currently known as Myanmar) and made it a province of British India. Workers were migrated to Burma from other parts of British India for infrastructure projects.
1942	Japan invaded Burma, pushing out the British. As the British retreated, Burmese nationalists attacked Muslim communities whom they thought had benefited from British colonial rule.
1945	Britain liberated Burma from Japanese occupation with the help of Burmese nationalists led by Aung San and Rohingya fighters. However, after that, Rohingyas felt betrayed as the British did not fulfil a promise of autonomy for Arakan.
1948	Tensions increased between the government of newly independent Burma and the Rohingya, many of whom wanted Arakan to join Muslim-majority Pakistan. The government retaliated by ostracizing the Rohingya, including removing Rohingya civil servants.
1950	Some Rohingya resisted the government, led by armed groups called <i>Mujahids</i> . The insurgency gradually died down.
1962	General Ne Win and his Burma Socialist Programme Party seized power and took a hard line against the Rohingya.
1977	The <i>junta</i> began Operation Nagamin or Dragon King, which they said was aimed at screening the population for foreigners. More than 200,000 Rohingyas fled to Bangladesh, amid allegations of army abuses. The army denied any wrongdoing.
1978	Bangladesh struck a U.N.-brokered deal with Burma for the repatriation of refugees, under which most Rohingya returned.
1982	A new immigration law redefined people who migrated during the British rule as illegal immigrants. The government applied this to all Rohingya.
1989	The army changed the name of Burma to Myanmar.
1991	More than 250,000 Rohingya refugees fled from what they said as forced labor, rape, and religious persecution at the hands of the Myanmar army. The army said that they were trying to bring order to Rakhine.
1992-1997	Around 230,000 Rohingyas returned to Arakan (currently known as Rakhine), under another repatriation agreement.
2012	Riots between Rakhine Buddhists and the Rohingya killed more than 100 people, mostly Rohingyas. Tens of thousands of people were driven to Bangladesh. Nearly 150,000 people were forced into camps in Rakhine.
2016	Rohingya militant groups <i>Harakah al-Yaqin</i> attacked border guard posts, killing nine soldiers. The army retaliated. More than 25,000 people fled from Rakhine to Bangladesh, bringing accounts of killing, rape and arson. Aung San Suu Kyi's government denied the atrocities.

Source: Al-Mahmood (2016) and Smith and Allsebrook (1994)

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After that, Bangladesh struck a U.N.-brokered deal with Burma for the repatriation of refugees, under which most Rohingyas returned. After that, in 1982, new immigration law was made to redefine people who migrated during the British rule as illegal immigrants. The government applied this to all Rohingya.

Once the army changed the name of Burma to Myanmar, strained situations emerged, causing more than 250,000 Rohingya refugees to flee from what they said as forced labor, rape, and religious persecution at the hands of the Myanmar army. The army said that they were trying to bring

order to Rakhine. From 1992 to 1997, around 230,000 Rohingya returned to Arakan (currently known as Rakhine), under another repatriation agreement.

The conflicts continued to fluctuate until 2012. Riots between Rakhine Buddhists and the Rohingya killed more than 100 people, mostly Rohingyas. Tens of thousands of people were taken to Bangladesh. Nearly 150,000 people were forced into camps in Rakhine.

The latest development in 2016 showed that Rohingya militant groups ‘Harakah al-Yaqin’ attacked border guard posts, killing nine soldiers. The army then retaliated. More than 25,000 people fled from Rakhine to Bangladesh, bringing accounts of killing, rape and arson. Aung San Suu Kyi’s government denied the atrocities. At this level, the Rohingya has evolved from oppressed ethnic groups to liberated ethnic groups due to repressive pressure imposed by the Myanmar government. Although liberation movements have emerged, the capability of majority ethnicity represented by the Myanmar government can still be said to be oppressive.

There are at least five levels of genocide in Myanmar. Based on publications from the International State Crime Initiative of London, the five levels include stigmatization, harassment, isolation, systematic weakening, and mass annihilation.

Five stages of genocide	
Stage	Rohingyas in Myanmar
1 Stigmatisation	Denied citizenship and not acknowledged as one of Myanmar’s official ethnic groups; labelled “Bengalis”
2 Harassment	Job discrimination; religious persecution; attacks by state security
3 Isolation	In 2012 herded into camps; villages cut off
4 Systematic weakening	Identity cards removed so cannot vote; barred from travelling, leading to loss of livelihood
5 Mass annihilation	Has not yet occurred, but no one has been prosecuted for a killing spree against Rohingyas in 2012

Source: Penny Green, International State Crime Initiative at Queen Mary University of London

Economist.com

Figure 1: Five Stages of Genocide in Myanmar
Source: The Economist (2015)

Based on these five stages, The Sentinel Project for Genocide Prevention makes a research publication focusing on the escalation of conflicts occurring in Myanmar with various categories of genocide and a number of oppression criteria such as oppression done by security forces, attacks on Muslims, government-related oppression, hate speech, and also anti-Rohingya protests. Here is the excerpt of this research.

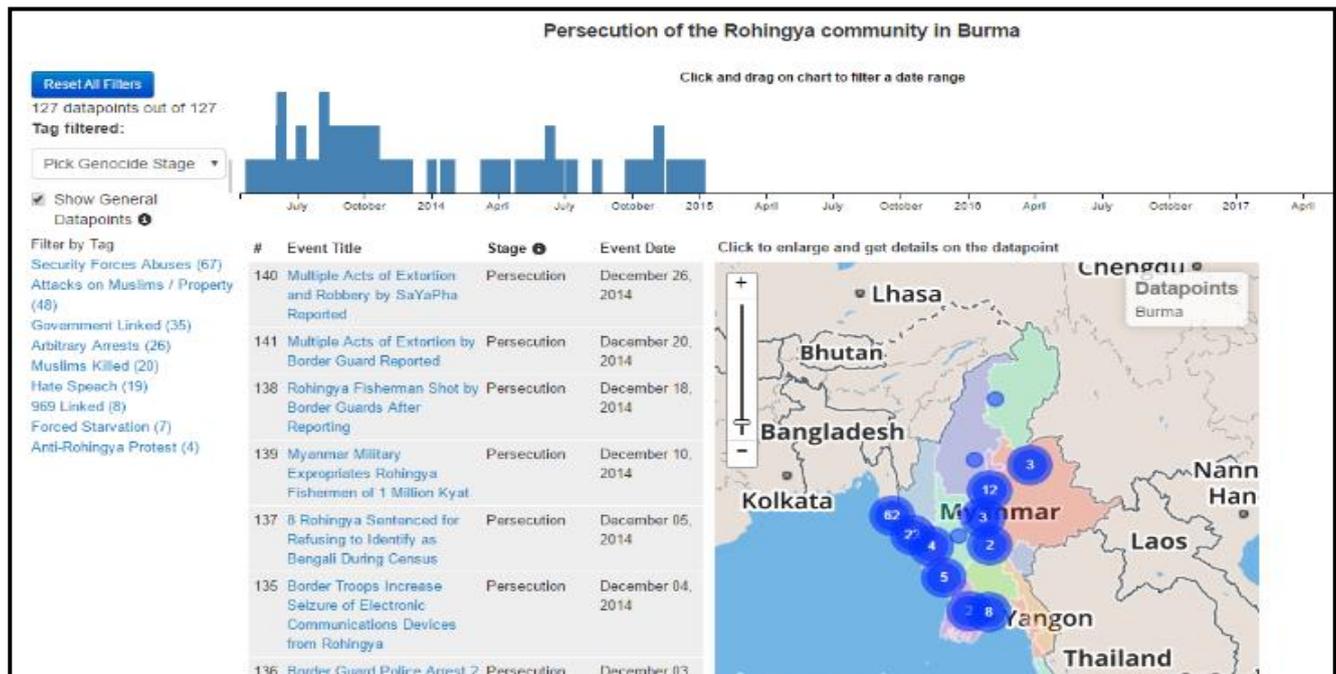


Figure 2: Publication of Rohingya Conflict Escalation Data in Burma (Myanmar)

Source: The Sentinel Project (2015)

It should be noted that there are at least eleven ethnic groups in Myanmar. Burman is the majority ethnic group while Rakhine is a Rohingya minority ethnic group whose people live on the western outskirts of Myanmar where many

human rights violations occur. Take a look at the following Figure 3.

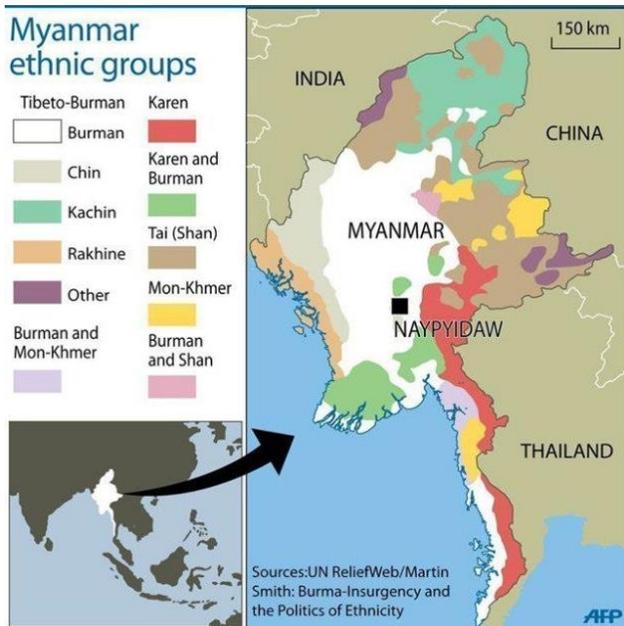


Figure 3: Distribution of Ethnic Groups in Myanmar

Source: Taken from UN Relief Web/Martin Smith, *Burma Insurgency and the Politics of Ethnicity*, and Smith and Allsebrook (1994)

Oppressions occurring in Myanmar have resulted in many Rohingyas fleeing from Myanmar because they are neither accepted in Myanmar nor Bangladesh. Some fled to Indonesia by the sea route to Aceh and some fled to Malaysia. Even, there are still Rohingyas constantly suffering in boats without certainty from anywhere. See Figure 4.



Figure 4: Smuggling Routes of Rohingyas Fleeing from Myanmar

Source: Bonasir (2015)

Around 1,600 Rohingyas and Bangladeshis fled from Myanmar to Malaysia and Indonesia. A total of 8,000 people fled to the Malacca Strait, 1,000 people fled to Langkawi, and 600 people fled to Aceh. The concern is that the conditions of the migrants in the Malacca Strait are reportedly still accommodated on a large ship around the

international sea without any clarity and touching any beach at all (AlJazeera, 2015).

4.2. Rohingyas and the Challenge of Human Rights Enforcement in ASEAN

Human rights have become a dominant issue in the discourse of contemporary international relations. Human rights, in this case, are the basic principle to achieve greater social goals and codified into a legal system providing an explanation of what rights are considered to be the most fundamental in society (Forsythe, 2006).

Rohingya is a minority ethnic group treated discriminatively by the Myanmar government through its various policies and also the radical Buddhist community in Myanmar through provocative anti-Rohingya Muslim campaigns. As stated in the previous section, in addition to not being recognized as one of the 135 indigenous ethnic groups of Myanmar, Rohingya ethnicity is also an object of dehumanization through widespread speeches of hatred, settlement restrictions, and even ethnic cleansing efforts designed systematically. The observer organization for human rights, Genocide Watch, provided an early warning of genocide against Rohingya as an oppressed group that is terrorized and forcibly evicted from their homeland by Myanmar authorities and Buddhist extremist groups (Hudson).

Although democratization is underway in Myanmar, marked by the transition from Myanmar's military junta government to civilian government by bringing up National League for Democracy as a party winning majority votes in general elections, there has been no change in the Rohingya's ethnic life as Myanmar's minority. Democracy which also requires respect and protection of human rights seems to be a point ignored by the Myanmar government. Referring to a report from the UN Special Reporter on human rights in Myanmar in 2017, the Rohingya did not get any profit from ongoing democratization. Repression of the Rohingya in October 2016 was a serious record for Myanmar authorities in cases of human rights violations in which this crisis resulted in 150,000 people fleeing, 3,000 people forcibly evicted from their settlements, and 69,000 people fleeing to Bangladesh during October 2016 to February 2017 (Davies, 2017).

ASEAN as a regional organization seems to be ineffective at a certain level or even can be said to be absent in dealing with human rights issues in Rakhine, Myanmar. The fundamental point becoming the main cause of ASEAN ineffectiveness in overcoming the issues of Rohingya Muslims is the principle of not interfering in domestic affairs of ASEAN member countries. This principle has been the basis of intra-ASEAN international relations since this organization was established in the 1960s. ASEAN's commitment to respecting sovereignty manifested in the principle of non-intervention is considered to hamper efforts of human rights protection since the organization establishment.

The principle of non-intervention also shows that ASEAN member countries respect differences in each country's political system. In practice, this principle prevents the presence of open criticism between ASEAN member countries regarding policies or track records in human rights protection. This has directly caused the promotion of human rights protection in ASEAN cooperation to be neglected. As a result, the member countries feel comfortable with policies considered to violate human rights by taking refuge behind the non-intervention principle because there will be no outsiders interfering in domestic affairs (Ahmad, 2016).

Protection of human rights and prevention of attempted mass murder or genocide are actually the main responsibility of the national government authority for the safety and welfare of its citizens. At the same time, the international community also has a moral obligation to get involved in dealing with or seeking solutions that cannot be prevented by the relevant government in the name of national sovereignty. Sovereignty, in this case, should not be seen as a barrier of the intervention of the international community in becoming a facilitator when the relevant country is deemed to fail to protect the fundamental rights of its citizens. It is clearly stated in the Responsibility to Protect (RtoP) adopted universally by world countries, including ASEAN member countries, in the 2005 World Summit (Ahmad, 2016).

This Responsibility to Protect (RtoP) has three main pillars in its implementation. First, a country has a primary obligation to protect its citizens from genocide acts, wars, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing, and incitement. Second, the international community has an obligation to support and help world countries to fulfil the obligations stated in the first point. Third, the international community is responsible for taking diplomatic measures and other efforts deemed appropriate to protect the population or citizens from crimes against humanity.

Given the background of ASEAN formation which is more concerned with economic cooperation and communist stemming, it is no wonder that ASEAN considers human rights not as a prioritized point for regional cooperation until the signing of the 2007 ASEAN Charter. This charter is a basic milestone for the efforts of human rights protection in ASEAN which also inspired the formation of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission of Human Rights (AICHR) – which was formally established in 2009 (Joanne, 2016).

The ASEAN Human Rights Commission – AICHR – has received much criticism from various circles for its performance which is considered to be less capable of protecting human rights at the Southeast Asia regional level. For example, John Sifton criticized that AICHR does not have real and binding power because the commission works through consensus between its member countries. This procedure will be very difficult to implement in terms of reporting and resolving alleged human rights violations if the relevant country rejects the involvement of outsiders in the issue occurred (Sifton, 2016). Additionally, this

commission also has a gap to be ineffective in terms of defining human rights which are more seen in the ASEAN context so that the commission is more consultative than overseeing and implementing mechanisms for protecting human rights in the member countries (Asplund).

Another problem causing the ASEAN Human Rights Commission (AICHR) to be less effective is the low democratization in several ASEAN countries, including Myanmar. Most ASEAN member countries tend to look negatively at democracy and human rights or even consider these two as threats to national sovereignty. It is the authoritarian regime nature in several ASEAN member countries which becomes the main obstacle for ASEAN to discuss issues about human rights protection. Even at the most extreme level, it can weaken the existence and function of the ASEAN Human Rights Commission itself (Mardhatillah).

In one side, Myanmar is undergoing democratization in its political system without neglecting the other fact that the Myanmar military still plays an important role in the system and also the decision-making process. It can clearly be seen from the 2008 Myanmar Constitution stating that the military has a reservation on parliamentary seats at the central and state levels by 25% (Nilsen, 2016). Constitutionally, power is still concentrated in the military in several key aspects related to security issues. The military has veto rights recognized by the constitution covering policy control over several ministries and declaring martial law (East Asia Forum, 2017).

Indonesia has an important role in overcoming the issue of human rights violation against the Rohingya ethnic group. There are three reasons why Indonesia can be a facilitator in finding peaceful solutions to Rohingya issues. First, Indonesia is the natural leader of ASEAN. Despite the rotation of ASEAN leadership every two years, Indonesia has always been able to bring new breakthroughs and initiatives within the framework of ASEAN cooperation. Second, Indonesia is the third largest democratic country in the world and the first for the Southeast Asian regional level. Indonesia is also a country with the largest Muslim population in the world that is able to show no conflict between Islam and democracy. Instead, these two things can run simultaneously. Since the era of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's administration, democracy and Islam have been important points in the components of diplomacy and foreign policy projected as Indonesia's soft power on the international political stage. Indonesia is a good example for Myanmar both in terms of democratic transition and management of inter-religious community relations.

Third, ASEAN is the first pillar of Indonesia's foreign policy known as a concentric circle. This model places ASEAN in the core circle, followed by ASEAN + 3 (China, Japan, and South Korea), major countries such as the United States, India, and the European Union, APEC and other international organizations such as the United Nations, OIC, and others. Although the Indonesian government currently

has its own approach patterns in its foreign policy, ASEAN remains Indonesia's top priority. This relies on the assumption that the regional stability will directly affect Indonesia's national stability. Political, economic and security dynamics occurring at the ASEAN level also affect Indonesia's domestic conditions and government policies.

The approach taken by the Indonesian government in overcoming the Rohingya crisis is to play the role of a third party bridging (bridge builder) related parties to find long-term peaceful solutions. The Indonesian government avoids the megaphone diplomacy approach because this approach is considered to be able to trigger Myanmar authorities to increasingly restrain from the international community over issues occurring in the state of Rakhine. Therefore, in practice, the Indonesian foreign policy towards Rohingya issues is more manifested through bilateral diplomacy directly either with Myanmar as the main party or source of problems as well as cooperation with countries that are directly affected by the conflict in Rakhine, such as Bangladesh, Thailand, and Malaysia.

4.3. Indonesian Foreign Policy towards Rohingya Issues

Rohingya issues get serious attention from the Indonesian public. The main factor causing the high Indonesian people's empathy to the dynamics occurring in the Rohingya ethnic group is the solidarity of fellow Muslims. Although there are arguments stating that Rohingya conflicts are political issues rooted in Myanmar's national orders (Azis, 2015) which do not recognize Rohingyas as Myanmar's native ethnic group and citizens. Therefore, the use of the religious dimension, in this case, becomes irrelevant and is considered to be dangerous as it potentially causes other issues such as extremisms in the name of religion. It cannot be denied that one of the main causes of discriminations and oppressions experienced by Rohingyas is their Muslim identity.

The Indonesian public's attention to this issue and their demand for the government involvement in finding solutions or making diplomatic pressures on Myanmar as an ASEAN member is normal for countries adhering to the notion of democracy in its political system. Since the Reformation Era began in 1998, public opinions and perceptions have been one of the important elements for the government in formulating both domestic and foreign public policies. Even in some cases, elements of civil society were also actively involved in the implementation of Indonesian foreign policy.

Indonesia considers Southeast Asia (ASEAN) as the first strategic environment. Issues bringing implications for ASEAN stability have become one of the Indonesian foreign policy priorities, given that ASEAN instability will also negatively affect Indonesia's domestic conditions. Indonesia is regarded as *primus inter pares* among ASEAN members and is highly expected to play an active role in overcoming regional issues. It is because Indonesia is always present

with various ideas and diplomatic initiatives to solve and mitigate regional issues, such as the South China Sea conflict and the conflict between Thailand and Cambodia on border disputes. Indonesia also plays an important role in encouraging the democratization process of the military junta in Myanmar.

Rohingya issues are challenges for Indonesia and ASEAN. For ASEAN, these issues show the principle of ineffective non-intervention in solving regional issues. The context of contemporary international relations is extremely different from the cold war era. The use of the principle of ineffective non-intervention by ASEAN becomes irrelevant in overcoming the complexity of contemporary issues. The failure of ASEAN in dealing with Rohingya issues will also have an impact on ASEAN's effectiveness in overcoming other issues such as the South China Sea conflict involving four ASEAN countries and China. Similarly, Indonesia's success in handling Rohingya issues will further strengthen Indonesia's position as the natural leader for ASEAN.

There are two important reasons underlying why Indonesian must actively involve in finding long-term peaceful solutions to Rohingya issues. First, the Rohingya crisis has created a wave of refugees from Myanmar to the regional countries, especially Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. Geographical conditions of Southeast Asia, which are relatively far from the conflict centres in the Middle East, make this area more difficult to reach by refugees if compared to Europe. In contrast, Rohingyas consider that the regional countries are their first options to seek refuge and protection from oppression and human rights violations committed by Myanmar authorities or radical Buddhist groups.

The Rohingya crisis continuously recurring every year shows the potential for a surge of refugee flow in a relatively short time but with a large amount. With estimated Myanmar's Rohingya population of 1.3 million people, the potential for the mass flow of refugees is very clear and tangible. At this point, the Indonesian government needs to make early efforts to prevent the increasing refugee flow by conducting diplomacy and intensive lobbying of Myanmar authorities to stop systematic human rights violations against Rohingyas. If Indonesia fails due to inactions in taking a stand and policy related to the issues, ASEAN will face a humanitarian crisis stretching from Rakhine to the archipelago waters, as reminded by John Coyne.

Second, the Rohingya crisis has affected the security of both Myanmar and Southeast Asia region due to increasing radicalization of extremist groups to carry out acts of terrorism against Myanmar's symbols or the presence of extremists and foreign fighters into Myanmar or the ASEAN region. The tendency for terrorism began to emerge in 2013 when Bodh Gaya – a temple and site where Buddhists were enlightened – was attacked on July 7 in which the Mujahideen Indians were considered as the group responsible for the attack. Anti-Buddhist sentiments have spread widely in South Asia and Southeast Asia since 2012

when the Rohingya crisis began to be known by the international community. Tehrik-e-Taliban, a Pakistani militant group, has asked the Pakistani government to close its embassy in Myanmar and break off the diplomatic relation with the country as a form of solidarity to the Rohingya. In 2013, there was also an attack on a Buddhist temple in Jakarta amid widespread anti-Buddhist sentiments linked by the government to the Rohingya issue based on information about the meeting of two members of RSO (Rohingya Solidarity Organization) with radical groups in Indonesia.

The Indonesian government prioritizes constructive diplomacy and avoids megaphone diplomacy ways so that humanitarian assistance can be given quickly and long-term peaceful solutions can be done sustainably. It is reflected in the Myanmar authorities' response to closing access to international assistance after alleged human rights violations against the world were exposed and led to sharp criticism from the international community. One sharp criticism came from the Malaysian government discovering that Myanmar authorities carried out ethnic cleansing against Rohingyas and urging an investigation into the incident.

The Indonesian government also intensively communicated with Myanmar regarding the issues. The Indonesian Foreign Minister, Retno Marsudi, visited Myanmar to meet the Myanmar State Counselor, Aung San Suu Kyi, in December 2016. Retno stated that Indonesia would take intensive diplomacy in overcoming Rohingya issues, one of which was by bridging communication between Myanmar and Bangladesh governments. As a country directly bordering with Myanmar, Bangladesh has a central role in dealing with the humanitarian crisis occurring in Rakhine.

5. Conclusion

Foreign policy is a term commonly discussed by the Indonesian public when referring to Indonesia's relations with the international world. In various literature on international relations, the concept used by IR scholars to refer to a country's policy towards the international world is foreign policy instead of foreign politics. The terminology of foreign policy in Indonesia can be interpreted as an identity that is a distinguishing characteristic between Indonesia and other world countries. Foreign policy is considered as a major paradigm adopted by a country about its permanent-tended international insights or how the country sees the world. Foreign policy is an implementation strategy applied with variations depending on the approach, style, and desire of the elected government. In this area, options are taken by considering various limitations (finance and resources) owned.

Regarding Rohingya issues, Indonesia considers Southeast Asia (ASEAN) as the first strategic environment. Issues bringing implications for ASEAN stability have become one of the Indonesian foreign policy priorities, given that ASEAN instability will also negatively affect Indonesia's domestic conditions. Indonesia is regarded as primus

inter pares among ASEAN members and is highly expected to play an active role in overcoming regional issues. It is because Indonesia is always present with various ideas and diplomatic initiatives to solve and mitigate regional issues, such as the South China Sea conflict and the conflict between Thailand and Cambodia on border disputes. Indonesia also plays an important role in encouraging the democratization process of the military junta in Myanmar.

The Indonesian foreign policy implemented in this case is a communicative and constructive foreign policy. This policy selection is motivated by the existing issues which potentially worsen ASEAN's image and stability. The Indonesian government takes this policy to examine the dependencies of several major powers involved in the issues. In other words, the public (non-megaphone) pattern of foreign policy and diplomacy is expected to be able to put the involved parties in these issues.

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