

---

# INDONESIA'S FOREIGN POLICY DURING SOEKARNO ERA 1945 - 1965: (ORIENTATION SHIFT FROM DIPLOMACY TO CONFRONTATION)

Irma Indrayani<sup>1</sup>, Harun Umar<sup>2</sup>, August Mellaz<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of International Relations, Faculty of Social and Political Science  
Universitas Nasional, Jakarta, Indonesia,

<sup>2</sup> Department of International Relations, Faculty of Social and Political Science  
Universitas Nasional, Jakarta, Indonesia,

<sup>3</sup> Master in Political Science, Postgraduate, Universitas Nasional

<sup>1</sup> Email: irma.indrayani@civitas.unas.ac.id

<sup>2</sup> Email: harun.umar@civitas.unas.ac.id

<sup>3</sup> Email: august.mellaz@civitas.unas.ac.id

**Abstract :** This paper aims to see the shift of Indonesia's foreign policy from diplomacy to a confrontation during the Soekarno era from 1945 to 1965. The change of foreign policy orientation become a spotlight on this paper that explores the issue based on historical chronology, national interest, and the dynamics of international politic that shaped the goal of Indonesia's international politics, that is to defend its independence and gaining recognition as an independent and sovereign country. The analysis used to study this shift of foreign policy of Indonesia, from diplomacy to confrontation is described using the qualitative method through a historical approach. The data and information used for analysis in this study are sourced from secondary data obtained from the literature study..

Keywords: foreign policy orientation, Sukarno government era, diplomacy, and confrontation

---

Submission : May, 09<sup>th</sup> 2020  
Revision : June 08<sup>th</sup> 2020  
Publication : August 30<sup>th</sup> 2020

---

## INTRODUCTION

The proclamation of Indonesia's independence on August 17, 1945, was a historical moment that determined how the orientation and foreign policy policies were directed towards achieving recognition as a sovereign nation-state entity. Michael Leifer, in his book "Indonesian Foreign Policy", states that Indonesia, as a new post-colonial country, faces its complexities. Given that the declaration of the new republic was carried out

before the existence of a country with territorial boundaries as is now known (Leifer, 1989: xi).

The recognition of the entity as a sovereign state, 'inevitably' becomes a framework for political orientation in the formation of the Indonesian state. On the other hand, it must be admitted that the Netherlands has a significant role in determining and implementing administrative unit boundaries in this plural island-based country. The recognition of sovereignty as an independent nation, in the end, became an entry point for the seeds of Indonesia's foreign policy. This was unavoidable, considering that since it was declared, the existence of this new republic had already faced opposition from the Netherlands. In Leifer's opinion, the early leaders of the government had a keen awareness and belief that, "armed resistance is not simply put aside, but independence is seen as more attainable and defensible through a diplomatic process involving third parties" (Leifer, 1989).

What mentioned above is an essential milestone of the emergence of a new chapter known as the seeds of Indonesia's foreign policy. The struggle through the realm of diplomacy that took place from 1946 to 1949 to achieve recognition of sovereignty was also marked by an intensifying political orientation which was considered to reflect the divisions and groupings of ideologies in Indonesia (Alfian et al., 1971). The period of diplomacy to recognize the sovereignty represented by several cabinets in the parliamentary system is a reflection of how the political orientation is formed and its influence in foreign policy choices taken.

The development of Indonesia's foreign policy during the early days of independence can at least be divided into two periods. The first period, the period 1946 to 1949, and the second period, 1949 to 1955. These two periods became a critical momentum that would mark the orientation and shift that became the basis for the implementation of Indonesia's foreign policy. After these two periods, the direction of Indonesia's foreign policy has shifted. From an orientation that initially focused on negotiations or diplomacy, it turned into a confrontation.

In the first period, 1946-1949. Indonesia's foreign policy is directed at efforts to defend the independence that was proclaimed on August 17, 1945, and gained international recognition as a sovereign state. This period can be seen from at least 8 (eight) negotiations, or agreements carried out by Indonesia with the Netherlands, namely, Indonesia, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom Negotiations in 1946; The Hoge Veluwe Conference on April 14-25, 1946; The Sjahrir Conference on 9-14 October 1946; Linggardjati Agreement dated 10-15 November 1946; Renville Agreement dated December 8, 1948; The Roem-Royen Agreement of May 17 1949; Inter-Indonesian Conference on 19-22 July 1949; and the Round Table Conference on 23 August-2 November 1949. Thus, during that period, all energy was mobilized to gain recognition of sovereignty through the negotiating table or diplomacy (Hanzel, 2015).

The second period, 1949-1955, became the realization period for free and active foreign policy. This was marked by the official joining of Indonesia to the UN on September 28, 1950, and at the same time an important marker of Indonesia's strong commitment to being actively involved and participate in world peace. Also, during this period the role of Indonesia's foreign policy was very prominent in Indonesia, namely being one of the important initiators for the solidarity movement of new countries and colonized

countries in the Asian and African regions to become independent. This can be seen from the joint initiative between Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, India, and Ghana in the holding of the Asia-Africa Conference or also known as the Bandung Conference on 18-24 April 1955. The results of the conference which later triggered the movement for independence struggle and mutual recognition. Among the countries of the Asian and African region. This period was also marked by the appearance of the third axis or pole from the two poles that previously existed, namely the 1961 Non-Aligned Movement (Hanzel, 2015).

The third period of Indonesia's foreign policy, which was reflected in 1953-1965, foreign policy began to experience a shift, from diplomacy schemes and solidarity building between colonized countries to confrontation with the forces that were deemed perpetuating colonialism and imperialism. The deadlock in negotiations over the status of West Irian (New Guinea), the change in the domestic political system from a Parliamentary Democracy to a Guided Democracy, and the strengthening of two poles of world political power between the Western Bloc and the Eastern Bloc during the Cold War, are prologues that trigger a shift in the orientation of Indonesia's foreign policy in the era of Sukarno.

The three periods above cannot be separated from the development of world politics that occurred as a result of the end of World War II and the emergence of the Cold War. The rise of new countries that declared their independence from the grip of imperialism and colonialism in the Asian and African regions, as well as changes in the world's geopolitics into two poles or bipolar between the Western Bloc and the Eastern Bloc. International recognition of sovereignty would be relatively easy to obtain if Indonesia had an alliance with one of the two existing poles. However, the choice to join one of the two existing poles, of course, hurts the ideals of the proclamation, namely the elimination of colonialism over the world.

The linkages between Indonesia's national interest that become the domestic political policy and its impacts to the international politics, can be traced to the first paragraph of the opening of the 1945 Constitution, "Whereas independence is the inalienable right of all nations, therefore, all colonialism must be abolished in this world as it is not in conformity with humanity and justice". It also emphasized on the fourth paragraph that the establishment of Indonesian government is to..." take part in implementing world order that based on independence, eternal peace, and social justice...". These clauses formed the fundamental base for Indonesia's international politics, which was known as "free and active,".

Therefore, the choice of a free-and-active foreign policy has the potential to create a new axis or an alternative third pole. This third axis can be a beacon for the emergence of the independence movement for countries in the Asian and African region that are still in the grip of colonialism and imperialism. With this new axis, the solidarity of the newly independent nations can be cultivated and give mutual recognition of sovereignty. The emergence of Indonesia as a new independent state in the post-World War II era is an essential symbol for various other regions where imperialism continues. Indonesia is faced with two main interests, namely recognition of its sovereignty as an independent state and support from the international community for its freedom.

From the three-time periods described above, important lessons can be learned about the choices or options that determine foreign policy, including global developments regarding the same fate as countries that have experienced colonialism and have recently become independent, solidarity to support the independence of countries that are still in progress. Colonialism and recognition of the status of sovereignty among countries in the Asian and African region, and the development of a new axis (Non-Bloc) as an alternative in facing the two existing sides. Thus, the axis has its power to determine the prosperity and development of its members sovereignly.

This research is focused on answering at least two problems, first, how was the development of Indonesia's foreign policy during the Sukarno era, and second, why there has been a shift in the orientation of Indonesia's foreign policy, from a direction that previously relied on diplomacy schemes to turn into a confrontation.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Indonesia's post-independence foreign policy is faced with a dilemma between the orientation of foreign policy and the direction of national development. However, the primary orientation of Indonesia's foreign policy in the post-independence era is colored by the spirit of the constitution, notably "abolishing colonialism" and "being involved in world peace". These two constitutional spirits at least have had a significant influence in Indonesia's foreign policy. Apart from the normative dimensions stipulated in the constitution, recognition of sovereignty as an independent state entity is one of the main goals.

On the one hand, Indonesia was willing to carry out various diplomacy with the Netherlands in the context of independence, on the other hand, it took part as an initiator and builder of solidarity for the anti-colonialism movement of the nations of the world. In that era, Indonesia took a significant role as a leader in the Asia-Africa Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement. In principle, the foreign policy adopted has made Indonesia one of the important actors in foreign policy, especially for multilateral diplomacy.

The orientation of Indonesia's foreign policy is a series of government policies that can be seen and determined based on the period of government leadership. The periodization of Indonesia's foreign policy itself gave rise to several causes which were determined by three main variables, namely, national interest, external political variables, and leader variables.

### **Foreign Policy**

KJ Holsti (1987: 135-136) makes a distinction between international politics and foreign policy, as follows. The interaction between a country and another country in a global context is referred to as international politics. Whereas in one situation, a state takes action or policy towards other countries or the international environment, it is referred to as foreign policy.

Thus, foreign policy is a policy study that uses an approach in the form of action, or a country's response to its environment, whether aimed at state or non-state actors (political community, business, non-state organizations) in the international sphere.

Meanwhile, international politics is characterized by a situation where the focus of the study is aimed at the interaction of a country and social, political, and business unit (Holsti, 1970).

Henry Kissinger, as quoted by Umar & Indrayani (2020), stated that "foreign policy begins when the domestic political policy ends". Foreign policy is a form of the domestic policy aimed at or oriented in the context of negotiations on international political issues. Thus, the foreign policy adopted by a country is an essential factor for the existence of each country.

### **Foreign Policy Making**

Many factors influence the decision making or foreign policy of a country. This is understood because the reality of the international world has its complexities. Thus, many variables need to be considered in foreign policymaking by a country. The foreign policy of a country is specifically made in the framework of a strategic setting for existing events or developments. For example, the foreign policy of the United States (US) to the crisis in Georgia in 2008 was a response to Russia's actions against Georgia. Likewise, the US missile defence policy in the European region has an impact on Russia, Poland, and the decision-making of the leaders of European countries (Mintz & DeRouen Jr., 2010: 121-122). In principle, foreign policymaking by a country cannot be ignored from the international situation, especially the security aspects that accompany it. Making decisions on foreign policy is an integral part of the consideration to provide security guarantees and the protection of the national interests of the country, making the policy.

Alex Mintz and Karl DeRouen JR in "Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making" emphasized that there are at least three determinants with their sub-factors that influence foreign policymaking, including: first, international factors, consisting of deterrence, arms races, strategic surprise, alliance formation, and regime type of the adversary; second, domestic factors, including economic conditions, economic interests, public opinion, electoral cycles, and two-level games; and third, cultural factors that exist in the society of each country, including the composition of the gender balance in the leadership of a country, also play a role in determining the strategic policy of a country's foreign policy (Mintz & DeRouen Jr., 2010).

Some data show that support for policies on the use of the military and weapons is getting lower in countries that have more female leaders than men. Likewise, the decision-making behaviour of business actors in several countries, such as the US, Japan, or China, is a reflection of national characteristics that are influenced by cultural factors from each country (Mintz & DeRouen Jr., 2010).

Foreign policy refers to the choices of individuals, groups and coalitions that determine the actions of a country and have an impact on the international sector. According to Renshon, foreign policy is generally characterized by high stakes, significant uncertainties, and substantial risks (Mintz & DeRouen Jr., 2010: 3). There are 4 (four) variables that are considered in making foreign policy, including decision environment, psychological factors, international factors, and domestic factors. Besides, the limiting factor significantly on the cognitive abilities and information sources possessed by the leaders of a country also influences the outcome of foreign policy. According to

Robinson and Snyder, in a foreign policy-making process there are 4 (four) essential components, among others: identifying the decision problem; searching for alternatives; choosing an option; and executing the choice (Steiner, 1977).

The 4 (four) components above are essential, given the setting of the agenda, the impacts that will arise, and the outcomes to be produced through foreign policy. In addition, a country's foreign policy is generally taken under conditions that cannot be said to be normal, in other words, undoubtedly under the pressure of the situation and time.

### **National Interest**

National interest is the concept of how political actors interpret the value of "what is best". The emergence of this concept can be traced back to the 16th and 17th centuries as "the will of the prince", "dynastic interest", "raison d'état", and several other terms. However, along with the emergence of the nation-state, these terms are no longer used and are gradually replaced by the terms "national honor", "public interest" and "general will". The term "national interest" itself by historian Charles Beard, apart from tracing its roots in Italy and England, the term is also widely used by US statesmen when drafting the constitution (Rosenau, 2006: 246).

Hans Morgenthau, a realist theory follower in international political studies, developed the concept of national interest as "the interest which is the most enduring main standard that influences and directs all political action". Thus, "foreign policy must be fully defined in terms of the objectives of the national interest" (Rosenau, 2006: 247-249).

Three assumptions form the basis of political realism thinking that ultimately lead to defining national interests as the basis for a country in carrying out its foreign policy. First, the state plays a significant role in international relations. Second, the state is an actor who acts unilaterally. And third, decision-makers are rational actors in the context of decision-making driven by the goal of pursuing national interests (Antunes & Camisão, 2017).

In the framework of international politics, the doctrine of the national interest is generally used in two interrelated ways. First, it is used as an explanation for a country's political behavior or actions to defend, oppose, or offer policy. Second, it is used by students or scholars as an analysis tool to describe and at the same time assess the adequacy of a country's strategy in its foreign policy (Burchill, 2005: 23). In other words, the national interest is a doctrine, and at the same time, the primary raw material for a country in implementing foreign policy policies. From this doctrine, it can be used as an analytical tool to assess the extent to which a country's interests and strengths are applied through its foreign policy to achieve goals.

### **Historical Context**

Mohammad Hatta's speech at the KNIP Workers' Board Session on September 2, 1948, was a necessary form of affirmation of Indonesia's political stance which was called "free and active". The speech entitled "Rowing Between Two Rocks", became the basis that Indonesia did not take sides between the two camps involved in the cold war, namely the US and the Soviet Union. Bung Hatta gave an illustration that Indonesia's

position was like a ship bobbing in the middle of the ocean and had to row over two rocks, namely, the US and the Soviet Union. Therefore, to be able to row past the two existing reefs, it requires a firm stance on Indonesia's foreign policy, namely, "free and active".

An excerpt from Bung Hatta's speech on September 2, 1948 which is an important point:

*"... Should we, the Indonesian people, who fight for the independence of our nation and state, have only to choose between pro-Russia and pro-America? Is there no other stand that we must take in pursuing our ideals? What we must consider is that we do not become objects in the international political struggle. Still, we must remain as subjects who have the right to determine our attitude, have the right to fight for our objectives, namely, an entirely independent Indonesia " (Hatta, 1948).*

"Every one of us certainly has sympathy for this group or that group, but the struggle for the nation cannot be resolved by the following sympathy alone, but should be based on reality, for the interests of our country at all times" (Hatta, 1948).

The quote from Bung Hatta's speech above provides an important indication that the ideals of the Proclamation and the nation's struggle to escape colonialism and become a sovereign state are determinants that will determine Indonesia's political policy steps. Thus, Indonesia, as a sovereign country with aspirations should not fall into one of the political camps which at that time was bipolar, between the US and the Soviet Union.

The view of Indonesia, as expressed by Hatta in 1948, can be approached within the framework of the concept of the international system. KJ. Holsti (1970) explained that the global system would be responded to by independent political units based on different points of view. However, the attribute factors, national needs, or individual character of policymakers, the external environment, power structures, and international influence have a significant effect in determining the general orientation of a country when dealing with other countries in the world.

Holsti further explained that every international system has a clear structure, in the sense that there is a configuration of power and influence characteristics that will determine the dominant relationship with sub-ordinates in the scheme of the central contact with the satellite. The setting of world politics that at that time was understood by Indonesia would only place Indonesia as a satellite of the two existing bipolar poles. Suppose that happens, in the sense that Indonesia is taking sides with one of the arising poles. In that case, Indonesia will not only enter into the sub-ordinate and satellite relations of the power structure but more than that, namely injuring the ideals of struggle as a sovereign state (Holsti, 1970).

Changes in the political constellation of the world as a result of the Cold War brought new complexities. It has an impact not only on relations between nations in the world, including demanding fundamental changes in Indonesia's foreign policy. Indonesian foreign policy, by Mohammad Hatta, is no longer called "rowing between two rocks", but "must sail the vast ocean without certainty". (Hatta, 1948). Hatta further reaffirmed the position of the Indonesian government regarding its political stance, which was conveyed on September 2, 1948, and repeated at the Government's Response at the BP KNIP Session on September 16, 1948. but we must remain as subjects who have the

right to determine our attitude, have the right to fight for our objectives, namely, Indonesia is entirely Free" (Hatta, 1948: 29).

Indonesia's post-independence foreign policy was faced with a dilemma between foreign policy and domestic development projects. However, the primary orientation of Indonesia's foreign policy in the post-independence era is colored by the spirit of the constitution, notably "abolishing colonialism" and "being involved in world peace". These two constitutional spirits at least have had a significant influence in Indonesia's foreign policy. On the one hand, Indonesia was willing to carry out various negotiations (diplomacy) with the Netherlands in the context of independence, on the other hand, it took part as an initiator and builder of solidarity for the anti-colonialism movement of the nations of the world. In that era, Indonesia took a significant role as a leader in the Asia-Africa Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement. In principle, the foreign policy adopted has made Indonesia one of the important actors in foreign policy, especially for multilateral diplomacy. Peking-Jakarta-Pyongyang axis, and changing its foreign policy to be more integrated with the United Nations World Organization and institutions of international cooperation (Sukma, 1995).

## **METHOD**

This research is aimed at understanding how the shift in the orientation of Indonesia's foreign policy in the era of the Sukarno government in the 1945-1965 period. The change in foreign policy from a diplomacy-based orientation to confrontation is the focus of this research. Analysis of the difference in the direction of Indonesia's foreign policy was carried out using qualitative methods. The analysis knife used in research uses a historical approach which is based on literature studies derived from books and documents or secondary data as the primary material. The research findings are presented in the descriptive form in answering how a shift in foreign policy orientation occurs and why this shift in foreign policy orientation occurs.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Indonesian foreign policy, as concluded by Leifer (1989) cannot be ignored, is a legacy of nationalism that had been fought for from the early 1920s to the 1945 Proclamation. Efforts to maintain independence and gain recognition of sovereignty as an independent state and the awareness that these two efforts were not easy to achieve are the seeds for the formation of Indonesia's foreign policy.

The momentum of shifting the orientation of Indonesia's foreign policy from diplomacy to confrontation cannot be separated from at least two significant changes affecting Indonesia, namely, the application of Guided Democracy in the domestic context and the emergence of the Cold War as an international context. With the implementation of Guided Democracy through the Decree of July 5, 1959, a coalition occurred between Sukarno as a symbol of revolutionary legitimacy armed with the constitution and the armed forces as a guarantor of real legitimacy for the integrity of the country (Leifer, 1989: 78-79).

Noam Chomsky (1991) states that the Cold War as a significant event that hit the world can be approached from two ways: first, only by accepting the conventional interpretation, namely, as a battle between two superpowers; and second, as a



perspective or point of view in seeing historical facts. It becomes a big question, how and what will be faced by the nations of the world next. Two contrasting faces represent Indonesian foreign policy in the 1960s, as described by Weinstein (1971). Foreign policy is a product of the continuous interaction between perception and politics. Therefore, the understanding of the political elite in seeing the risks to the Indonesian political system is an essential measure for conducting an assessment (Weinstein, 2007: 288-290).

### **Confrontation Against The Dutch: Liberation Of West Irian**

A shift in the foreign policy orientation of the Sukarno leadership era, from diplomacy to confrontation appeared after 1950. This was a result of the deadlock in the negotiation processes related to the status of West Irian (New Guinea) between Indonesia and the Netherlands, as well as the ambivalence taken by the US. The US pretends to be neutral is read from the viewpoint of Dean Rusk, the US Deputy Secretary of State in 1950, namely, "that the interests of the Dutch New Guinean population can best be realized by the continuing of Dutch control in some form". This situation became even more dilemma when a new government in Australia emerged from a conservative camp. Thus, the Netherlands will increasingly have more allies, apart from the US (Leifer, 1989: 44-46).

In response to the development and impasse of the West Irian negotiations above, Sukarno delivered his speech in August 1950 to coincide with the 5th anniversary of the Proclamation of Independence "if a negotiated settlement is not reached within this year, a major conflict will occur over who will rule the island. Since then ". Sukarno continued again that Indonesia would fight forever "as long as one part of our country was not free" (Leifer, 1989: 45).

The change in the orientation of Indonesia's foreign policy was getting more potent after the 1959 Decree. The Indonesian political landscape, both domestic and international, underwent a fundamental change. From the application of liberal democracy through a parliamentary system imbued with diplomacy and negotiations to find solutions to Indonesia's problems, it changed to Guided Democracy which was directly commanded by Sukarno. Changes in the political system changed the orientation and road map of Indonesia's foreign policy to be more radical and revolutionary. Domestic policies are aimed at two things, namely, strengthening the unitary state and the welfare of the people. However, this goal will never be achieved if international imperialism, colonialism and capitalism, which are the main enemies, are not destroyed (Sukma, 1995).

Sukarno also conveyed a confrontational attitude towards the liberation of West Irian from Dutch colonialism at the United Nations General Assembly annual session in 1960. In his speech, Sukarno emphasized that Indonesia's tolerance for West Irian was almost over and that the UN failure was described as a product of the same Western system that gave birth to imperialism. Even Sukarno also proposed that the UN Headquarters be moved, not in New York, but to one of the countries in Asia or Africa or Geneva. This speech was also repeated by Sukarno in more detail at the first conference of the Non-Aligned countries in Beograd Yugoslavia in September 1961 (Leifer, 1989: 84-85).

The escalation of the confrontation with the Netherlands over the status of West Irian increased along with the supply of military equipment from Eastern Bloc countries such as Czechoslovakia, Poland, and intensive relations between Indonesia and Moscow. Indonesia's readiness to carry out a full-scale military invasion ultimately played a role in 'coercing' the US through President Kennedy to intervene, by calling for an end to the use of force against Indonesia and the Netherlands. If further investigated, the change in the position of the US in favor of Indonesia in the status of West Irian was US interest in the Cold War, namely, stemming the pace of communism. With the handover of West Irian to Indonesia, as Sukarno had said to the US Ambassador, "if the United States changes its position over West Irian, it will get rid of the communists" (Leifer, 1989: 96-105).

### **Confrontation against the us: "go to hell with your aids"**

Foreign policy confrontation continued again and this time against the US. Baskara T. Wardaya, in his book "Indonesia Against America: Cold War Conflict, 1953-1963", reveals several facts, why Sukarno took the attitude of confrontation and even resistance to the US. In hindsight, this resistance could not be separated from the ambivalence and ambiguous policies of the US government leaders, both that occurred at the beginning to the end of World War II. This policy paradox became more robust and gained momentum when it entered the Cold War era with the implementation of the "Containment Policy" or the central part of the Truman doctrine in the context of curbing the rate of expansion of communism (Wardaya, 2008: 29).

At first, there was hope that the US, which became a symbol of anti-colonialism and the Allied leaders winning World War II, would become a supporter of Indonesia and many other countries that were still in a colonial position. However, a number of his policies showed the opposite, namely, supporting recolonization, particularly regarding Indonesian independence. This can be seen from the letter of President Roosevelt to Queen Wilhelmina dated April 6, 1942, which stated that the Indonesian archipelago would be handed over to the Dutch after the war. "The Dutch East Indies must be returned, and my feeling (Roosevelt) says that it will soon become a reality" (Wardaya, 2008: 20).

The continuation of the implementation of the Truman Doctrine was further reflected in the "Marshall Plan" of June 5, 1947, namely, a program aimed at building the post-war economy of West Europe. Through this scheme, until the end of 1948, the Netherlands received nearly USD 300 million in assistance and at least USD 300 million in the form of Export-Import Bank credit, USD 130 million loans to purchase America's war surplus supplies, USD 190 million for civilian purposes, and USD 61. million for the benefit of Dutch colonial officials in Indonesia (Wardaya, 2008: 29). Therefore, it would not be wrong if the Marshall scheme was understood as another form of US support for the Netherlands to restore its grip on Indonesia.

Long before the realization of the "Marshall Plan", the ambiguity of the US can also be seen from the results of the Potsdam meeting, when there was the transfer of jurisdiction from US Marshal Douglas McArthur to British Marshal Lord Luis Mountbatten. The removal of jurisdiction became a critical note that benefited the Netherlands, because it was free from US anti-colonial pressure, considering that Britain

in principle had the same status as the Netherlands, namely, both colonial in the Asian region (Wardaya, 2008: 24). It was at this point that the leaders of the republic realized that relying on hopes on the US was futile. The ambiguous position of the US, which was considered pro to the Netherlands, also dragged on and emerged from the Linggajati Agreement, Military Aggression I, to the KMB (Wardaya, 2008).

### **Confrontation Against Britain: Bring Down Malaysia**

The confrontation with the formation of the Malaysian Federation emerged only 5 (five) months after West Irian's status was won and became part of Indonesia. This incident originated from a rebellion in the British protectorate, namely, the Sultanate of Brunei against the legitimacy of the Malaysian Federation. The British attempt to unite Sabah, Singapore, Sarawak and Brunei into one federation undeniably evokes memories of the structure of the federation in Indonesia which was forced by the Dutch against the ideals of the republic. Sukarno saw the Malaysian Federation as a country that was not genuine, had no solid ideology, and was nothing more than a reflection of the aspirations of colonialism and imperialism in a new form (Leifer, 1989: 110-111).

The orientation of the confrontation in the next foreign policy occurred through an event known as "Bring Down Malaysia (Ganyang Malaysia)". This time Sukarno's position was directly against the British to oppose the establishment of the Malaysian Federation. Indonesia considered that the Malaysian Federation was a unification or "the concentration of new colonial powers on the Indonesian border" (Leifer, 1989: 113). The unification of the four Malaysian territories is a form of a puppet state and is nothing more than a mere tactic of imperialism (Kusmayadi, 2017). Sukarno's confrontational move was once again affirmed: "that Indonesia would carry out a policy of confrontation with Malaysian ideas in the political and economic sphere" (Leifer, 1989: 116-117).

The escalation of confrontation against the Malaysian Federation took several forms, including a statement of attitude and political demonstrations; termination of economic relations; and limited deployment of regular military forces. Several diplomatic steps were also carried out based on suggestions as well as assistance from other countries such as the United States, the Philippines, Thailand and Japan. However, they were faced with a series of failures. The climax of confrontation occurred when Indonesia declared its exit as a member of the UN on January 7, 1965, as a result of Malaysia's acceptance as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council (Kusmayadi, 2017).

The change in confrontation orientation in Sukarno's foreign policy cannot be separated from Indonesia's domestic conditions, particularly the deteriorating economic conditions. This situation becomes a test point to what extent the endurance of Indonesia's national interest is operationalized through foreign policy. The attitude of pessimism regarding the sustainability of Sukarno's foreign policy, as stated by Bunnell (1966), will be tested through two criteria. First, stagnation in developing the Indonesian economy, which at that time, was declining. Second, in the context of national unity and confidence. Particularly in the confrontation with Malaysia, Sukarno was depicted as a rooster with his beak pecking at the Malaysian Federation, while his tail was full of dirt. By using Saussure's semiotic analysis, it is stated that Sukarno was

metaphorized as a Rooster or a brave fighter, but on the other hand, his tail, which was full of dirt, caused a smell in his own country (Harun et al., 2015).

Indonesia's foreign policy has always been closely related to domestic politics which is in its national interest. Sukarno (1945-1965) pursued the goals of national interests, namely, managing the sovereignty of the archipelago, forging the unity and social ties of a heterogeneous population, and promoting economic prosperity. Recognition of freedom as an independent country and solidarity with third world countries were essential features of Sukarno's foreign policy. Under the Sukarno era, Indonesia nationalized foreign economic assets, campaigned against US aid through the slogan "go to hell with its aid", confrontation against Malaysia, and became the only country ever to leave the UN (Murphy, 2012).

The scenario of confrontation carried out through the Sukarno era's foreign policy ended when the events of 1965 marked the transition of Indonesia's leadership, from confrontational Sukarno to Suharto, who was considered cooperative. Although the US is considered not the party that directly pushed Sukarno out of power and was at the same time responsible for the killing of hundreds of thousands of PKI sympathizers, the fact that Suharto provided assessments and neutralized these events was in line with the goals that the US had publicly stated. This is also supported by facts accompanied by a long history of US intervention in countries other than Indonesia (Brands, 1989).

The period of Sukarno's foreign policy, from diplomatic orientation to confrontation ended with the 1965 events that shifted his leadership chair. The period of confrontation, especially with Malaysia, completed through a series of diplomacy between Indonesia and the Kingdom of Malaysia, namely, the conflict resolution formulation conference in Bangkok on May 28, 1966, and followed by the signing of a peace agreement between the two countries on August 11, 1966.

## CONCLUSION

Efforts to defend the independence and gain recognition of sovereignty as an independent state are the main goals of Indonesia's national interests. Armed resistance, on the one hand, will not be able to take place effectively if it is not balanced with diplomatic measures. This strategy has become a separate chapter in Indonesia's foreign policy.

Entering the Cold War era, which was accompanied by changes in the dynamics of international politics which were dominated by two political poles, namely, the West Block and the East Block had an impact on the shift in the orientation of Indonesia's foreign policy. Several deadlocks that occurred in diplomacies, such as in the issue of the Liberation of West Irian, the paradox of anti-colonialism policies in US foreign policy, and the tendency to strengthen the grip of British imperialism on the issue of the Malaysian union state, were seen as disturbing Indonesia's national interests.

Diplomacy measures as a foreign policy scheme aimed at achieving Indonesia's national interests are considered inadequate in the context of changes in international politics in the Cold War era. Therefore, efforts to make national interests, changes in strategy and orientation of confrontation were taken as a policy choice in Indonesian foreign policy in the Sukarno era. The confrontation strategy used by the Sukarno government was, in fact, successful for the issue of West Irian liberation, but failed for the issue of

confrontation with Malaysia. Sukarno's foreign policy ended when the 1965 events occurred, along with the end of his leadership of Suharto.

## REFERENCES

- Alfian, Feith, H., & Castles, L. (1971). "Indonesian Political Thinking": A Review. *Indonesia*, 11, 193–200. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3350750>
- Antunes, S., & Camisão, I. (2017). Realism. In S. McGlinchey, R. Walters, & C. Scheinpflug (Eds.), *International Relations Theory* (pp. 15–21). E-International Relations Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.5848/csp.2823.00001>
- Brands, H. W. (1989). The Limits of Manipulation: How the United States Didn't Topple Sukarno. *The Journal of American History*, 76(3), 785–808. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2936421>
- Bunnell, F. P. (1966). Guided Democracy Foreign Policy: 1960-1965 President Sukarno Moves from Non-Alignment to Confrontation. *Indonesia*, 2, 36–76. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3350755>
- Burchill, S. (2005). The National Interest in International Relations Theory. In *The National Interest in International Relations Theory*. Pgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230005778>
- Chomsky, N. (1991). *Deterring Democracy*. Hill and Wang.
- Hanzel, M. (2015). *Sejarah Politik Luar Negeri Indonesia*. <https://matthewhanzel.com/2015/04/11/sejarah-politik-luar-negeri-indonesia/>
- Harun, A., Razak, M. R. A., Ali, A., Nasir, M. N. F., & Radzuan, L. E. M. (2015). Anthropomorphism in Political Cartoon: Case Study of the 1965 Malaysia-Indonesia Confrontation. In *International Colloquium of Art and Design Education Research (i-CADER 2014)* (pp. 53–60). Springer Singapore. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-287-332-3\\_6](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-287-332-3_6)
- Hatta, M. (1948). *Mendajung Antara Dua Karang*. Kementerian Penerangan Republik Indonesia.
- Holsti, K. J. (1970). National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy. *International Studies Quarterly*, 14(3), 233–309. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3013584>
- Holsti, K. J. (1987). *Politik Internasional: Kerangka Analisa* (Cetakan Pe). Pedomam Ilmu Jaya.
- Kusmayadi, Y. (2017). POLITIK LUAR NEGERI REPUBLIK INDONESIA PADA MASA KONFRONTASI INDONESIA-MALAYSIA TAHUN 1963-1966. *Jurnal Artefak*, 4(1), 23. <https://doi.org/10.25157/ja.v4i1.732>
- Leifer, M. (1989). *Politik Luar Negeri Indonesia*. GRAMEDIA.
- Mintz, A., & DeRouen Jr., K. (2010). *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making*. Cambridge University Press.
- Murphy, A. M. (2012). Democratization and Indonesian Foreign Policy: Implications for the United States. *Asia Policy*, 13(1), 83–111. <https://doi.org/10.1353/asp.2012.0011>
- Rosenau, J. N. (2006). *The Study of World Politics* (Vol. 1). Routledge Taylor and Francis Group. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203014721>
- Steiner, M. (1977). Review Article: The Elusive Essence of Decision: A Critical

- Comparison of Allison's and Snyder's Decision-Making Approaches. *International Studies Quarterly*, 21(2), 389–422. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2600301>
- Sukma, R. (1995). The Evolution of Indonesia's Foreign Policy: An Indonesian View. *Asian Survey*, 35(3), 304–315. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2645547>
- Umar, H., & Indrayani, I. (2020). State Political Behavior: (Foreign and Domestic Policy, Diplomacy and Cooperation, International Political Dynamics). *Journal of Social and Political Sciences*, 1(2), 102–116. <http://e-journal.unas.ac.id/index.php/jsps/article/view/14/13>
- Wardaya, B. T. (2008). *Indonesia Melawan Amerika: Konflik Perang Dingin, 1953-1963*. Galang Press.
- Weinstein, F. B. (1971). The Indonesian Elite's View of the World and the Foreign Policy of Development. *Indonesia*, 12, 97–131. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3350661>
- Weinstein, F. B. (2007). *Indonesian Foreign Policy and the Dilemma of Dependence: From Sukarno to Soeharto*. Equinox.