

DEFENSE DIPLOMACY AND COUNTRY EXISTENCE

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This paper aims to discuss defense diplomacy efforts by TNI to strengthen the country existence. The world multipolarization put foreign policy into new challenges of world power distribution, non-boundary and not centered on two classical blocs (East and West). This condition requires the TNI to have an adaptive capacity related to the role and ability in responding to challenges in defense diplomacy tasks. There are 3 conclusions related to defense diplomacy in strengthening the existence of country. First, world multipolarization creates challenges to provide an opportunity for Indonesia to use it as an opportunity to build more constructive relationships in developing the country interests from the economic, socio-cultural and defense sectors. Second, actualization of defense diplomacy as a national policy must be consistent with country interests, especially in effort to maintain domestic stability which is closely related to regional situation. Third, several strategic partner countries of Indonesia need to receive comprehensively a systematic and programmed treatment in according with character of defense diplomacy, namely Confidence Building Measure (CBM), enhancement of defense capabilities and development of defense industry. Therefore, government needs to develop its relevance by exploring defense diplomacy as the spearhead to strengthen the existence of Indonesian nation and country.

Key words: *Diplomacy, Multipolar, Defense, TNI*

1. INTRODUCTION

The complexity of nation's problems today creates various challenges, both from within and outside the country. This condition requires the TNI to have an adaptive capacity to deal. This situation is sufficient to emphasize

aspects of role and ability of TNI in responding to the challenges of defense diplomacy tasks. This capability is based on formal legal aspects referring to Law 37 of 1999 on Foreign Relations that every diplomatic effort is always aimed at national interests and has a strategic function. As we know, all national

interests that are accommodated in any international diplomacy must be based on a constitutional politics of “free and active” and not follow certain blocs. Figure 1 shows the classic world powers / blocs formed after the Second World War.

relationship in order to create a kind of mutualism symbiosis with many countries in developing the country’s interests from the economic, socio-cultural and defense sectors.

The reality shows that issues raised in international constellation

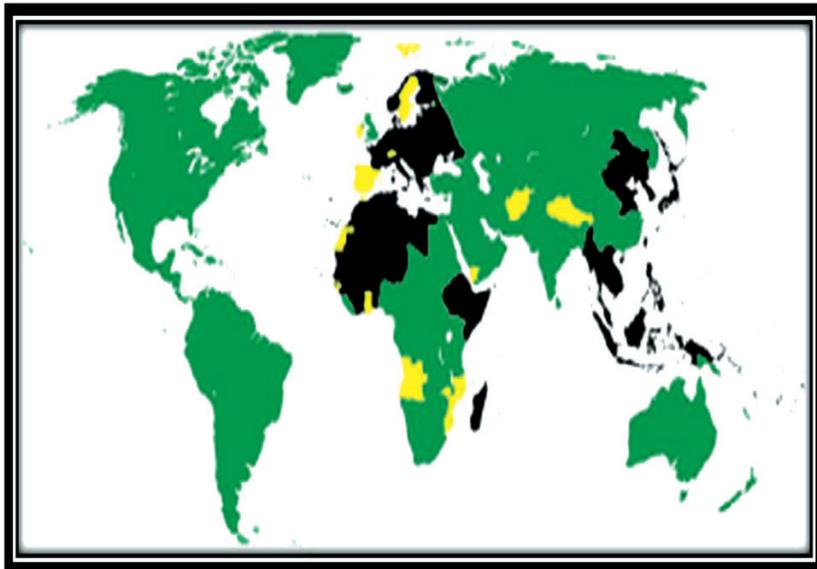


Fig. no. 1. Classical Powers / Blocks of Post-World War II World
Description:Green: Coalition countries, Black: Axis Power, Yellow: Neutral countries, Source: study.com

The strategic environment in multipolarization world has brought the “free and active” foreign policy into new challenges where the international constellation shows that distribution of world power has spread to several countries, non-boundary and no longer centered on two classical blocs (East and West). However, this challenge becomes an opportunity for Indonesia to take advantage to build a more constructive

are growing from political and security issues to strategic problems in economic, social, cultural, energy and environmental development fields (Ozkan, 2015; Golan and Carrol, 2012). The emergence of these problems cannot be separated from the fact that without proper handling, it will have an effect on vulnerabilities of fundamentalism, poverty, social inequality and drugs. This condition becomes a kind of

latent danger to threaten regional security and world stability. It should be anticipated early through a constructive approach and comprehensive diplomacy.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is a case study and observation on defense diplomacy conducted by Indonesia. The research time was January to June 2020.

The study type is descriptive research to describe the research object to describe the object under study. The method used by the author is qualitative (Moleong, 2017). Informants are individuals who have a direct relationship with the implementation of Indonesia's defense diplomacy.

This research data collection method consists of literature and field studies. Literature study is the process to get data or information by studying the books, journals, other written works, and internet sources. Field study is data or information collection through direct research activities at research location using three research instruments used, namely observation, interviews and documentation (Ghozali, 2016).

Data analysis in this study used a qualitative method. It is done

by examining all available data from various data sources, studying the data, analyzing, compiling in a unit, which was then categorized at the next stage and checking the validity of the data and analyzing to get research findings from the data (Moleong, 2006).

3. DEFENSE DIPLOMACY SCHEME

The dynamics trend of political and security threat accompanied by fluctuating stability in economic, social and cultural fields make the international diplomacy patterns play an important role for a country (Nath, 2014; Khalitova et al., 2020; Magen and Lapid, 2018). For Indonesia, referring to "Defense White Paper 2008", there are two levels of cooperation "layers" which can be derived into a defense diplomacy format. The first layer is military-military cooperation with ASEAN member countries, while the second layer is defense cooperation with "external powers" such as China, Australia, United Countries and South Korea. Judging from the development of above cooperation patterns, in principle everything can be classified into two levels of international relations institutions or what is known as "Track". Track I is a form of international cooperation

to involve government personnel such as ministerial level officials, members of parliament and members of military. While Track II is a form of collaboration by facilitating academic forums, communities, NGOs or government think Thank institutions.

The actualization of defense diplomacy can continue to develop based on country interests, especially to maintain the domestic stability that closely related with regional situation. This ability can make Indonesia to have a country entity that can communicate effectively in implementation of relations between countries. Berridge and James (2003) stated that diplomacy was “The use of tact in dealing with people”. In particular, this situation can be seen as Indonesia’s diplomatic initiative for the sensitive issues, such as those related to country sovereignty, transnational crime, and regional conflicts as efforts to create security and prosperity both domestically and abroad.

Indonesia, as the largest country in Southeast Asia, has taken several concrete steps through the domination of strategic influence. Indonesia is ASEAN initiators that active to encourage countries to seek peaceful solutions to several problems such as disputes in South China Sea, overcoming natural disasters, fighting terrorism, human

trafficking, and cyber security and so on. The transnational maritime crime prevention uses the patterns such as joint exercises and patrols as a continuation of Track-1, while academic forums, scientific discussions, workshops are examples of Track-2 applications. The two tracks basically move in a system that provides mutual input so that formulated agreement can be accepted by all countries.

4. CHARACTER OF DEFENSE DIPLOMACY AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

The projection of multipolar international political constellation encourages Indonesia’s defense diplomacy to move to create strategic partnerships in defense sector with several developed countries. Countries such as the US, France, Russia and China are currently considered to have a fairly progressive level of military modernization in world. The construction of Indonesia’s strategic partnership, especially in defense sector, should be able to catch up and bench mark itself with these countries for sake of strengthening, modernizing and professionalism in building existing military structures. This is consistent with the schema in Figure 2.

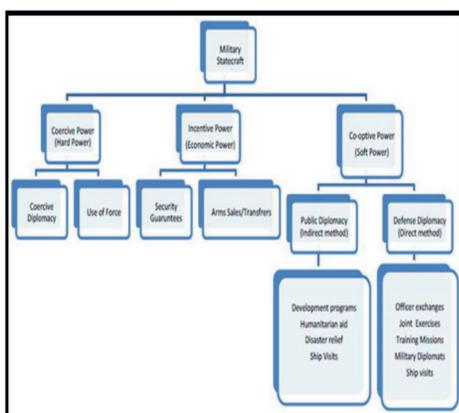


Fig. no. 2. Conceptualization of Defense Diplomacy

Source: Winger (2014), *Velvet Gauntlet: A Theory of Defense Diplomacy*

The position of defense diplomacy for a country will also become the determinant at this point. It is needed to provide direction for development of its defense forces in order to secure national interests in a very dynamic strategic environment. In accordance with national defense policy, modernization of defense forces does not only rely on domestic national resources, but is also supported by cooperation with friendly countries.

Mertz (2015) described defense diplomacy as an art of “playing” the tension between the bashing and bargaining). It can mean a strategic partnership with a number of countries in order to create opportunities and especially for Indonesia to strengthen its defense diplomacy construction to achieve the optimal benefits in

defense sector. It contains the value of a partnership. This essence must be as effective as possible to avoid the counterproductive impression of a negative dependencies and unnecessary dependence on foreign countries. To achieve this aim, Indonesian government needs to pay careful attention to character of defense diplomacy in an effort to build a defense diplomacy mechanism that beneficial for nation interests. Therefore, the defense diplomacy should have character below.

- a. Defense diplomacy should increase in Confidence Building Measure (CBM). The defense diplomacy should create a conducive strategic environment for Indonesia. For this reason, it is time for defense diplomacy to be prepared as a policy study in national defense projections. Confidence Building Measure has a close relationship with condition of national defense because this character determines the nature of cooperation developed with other countries. The focus is a series of efforts to build good relations with other countries in order to share perceptions, creating a conducive climate bilaterally and transparently. These steps will reduce the tension of mutual suspicion, mutual threat so that

development of a country's military capability is not misinterpreted as a threat to other countries. The scope of defense diplomacy for CBM includes communication, constraints, transparency and verification. If the objectives of CBM are achieved, globally it will create security and stability at national, regional and regional levels to support domestic and regional welfare development programs. CBM's current concrete efforts can be seen in various diplomatic activities such as communication forums at the bilateral and multilateral levels, country visits, information exchange, cooperation agreements, and educational exchanges to training and joint security patrols.

- b. Defense diplomacy should increase the Defense Capabilities. The emergence of military power elements in pattern of international diplomacy is an important variable to affect the bargaining aspect. Schelling (1980) stated that in a realist perspective, diplomacy is interpreted as a bargaining chip, and then the presence of military power becomes a separate element of

intervention for this concept. Therefore, national interest of a country in today's modern era increasingly requires the existence of its defense capability. This situation put the defense diplomacy as a transformation tool to increase the defense capability of a country which of course still takes into account the elements of limited resources, threats, challenges, vulnerabilities and opportunities. For example, that limited resources in an effort to increase defense capability can be a starting point to exploit the defense diplomacy through an economic and arms trade approach. The Export Credit (KE) mechanism in purchasing Alutsista can be categorized as defense diplomacy with a character of defense capabilities.

- c. Defense diplomacy should increase Defense Industry Capability Development. Defense policy through developing forces to achieve Minimum Essential Force (MEF) is implemented in form of modernization of military equipment. The priority for domestic production is the main program to meet this need. Referring to Law No.

16 of 2012 on the Defense Industry, format for procuring military weaponry needs from foreign countries is permitted if it is not maximally fulfilled domestically. Therefore, character of defense diplomacy specifically emphasizes the role of diplomacy in developing the capability of defense industry. Technically, this cooperation mechanism can be regulated in more detail at several systems, including the structure of counter trade, transfer of technology and others to produce the high technology defense equipment required by TNI.

The defense diplomacy in developing the capability of defense industry should be used to “hold” other countries contribution. There is a demand for Indonesia to continue to proactively increase cooperation in defense industry with strategic partners; the effective defense diplomacy becomes the main foothold. The steps should take to be built mutual benefits, among others, through the mechanisms of joint production, joint development, training and research and development in an effort to increase the capacity of human resources.

The strategic setting of defense industry development with a defense diplomacy platform has broader

opportunities to increase capabilities in terms of quality of human resources, technology, production and marketing. The outcome of this is the creation of jobs which in turn will improve the welfare of people, strengthen the capability of domestic defense industry and creating synergies with defense industry abroad.

The three characters of defense diplomacy above will ultimately be useful to strengthen the existence of a country with a military capability approach. For Indonesia, of course the TNI professionalism is a key component to create a defense force capability to secure national interests. Therefore, the defense diplomacy can become the main gate for military as one variable to show the existence of country to continue the capabilities development. The cooperation to improve the professionalism of soldiers with other countries has been established, in form of joint training, education and training, exchange visits and others. This diplomacy creates an opportunity for TNI to improve the professionalism of its soldiers.

Strategic partnership through defense diplomacy is a great opportunity for a country by increasing its military professionalism. Several countries, such as the US, Australia, Japan, Korea and China, are strategic partners in Indonesia and have a long history of military experience,

which has influenced the current doctrinal and defense strategy. Although the doctrinal and defense strategies adopted by Indonesia's strategic partner countries are not the same as Indonesia's defense doctrines and strategies, they can enrich TNI's insights to improve its professionalism.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Several conclusions can be drawn from the discussion related to defense diplomacy in strengthening the existence of following countries.

- a. World multipolarization brings foreign policy to new challenges, namely the distribution of world power, non-boundary that no longer centered on two classical blocs (East and West). This presents a challenge that provides opportunity for Indonesia to build more constructive relationships in developing the country interests from the economic, socio-cultural and defense sectors.
- b. The actualization of defense diplomacy as a national policy must be consistent with country interests, especially in effort to maintain domestic stability which is closely related to regional situation. This is a diplomatic

ability of Indonesia as a country entity that can communicate effectively to make relationship between countries.

- c. Third, several strategic partner countries of Indonesia need to receive comprehensively a systematic and programmed treatment in according with character of defense diplomacy, namely Confidence Building Measure (CBM), enhancement of defense capabilities and development of defense industry.

For the three characteristics, government needs to develop its relevance by exploring defense diplomacy as the spearhead to strengthen the existence of Indonesian nation and country.

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