

AN INDONESIAN PERSPECTIVE TOWARD MARITIME VISION: IS PURSUING NATIONAL INTEREST WHILE MAINTAINING NEUTRALITY IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA POSSIBLE?

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Abstract

Overlapping claims in the South China Sea has turned into a contested zone for global powers to project their roles in the region. Given the political uncertainty in international affairs, states prefer to acquire their own national interests for the sake of nations' prosperity. Indonesia, one of regions' prominent actors committed to be a non-claimant state in the dispute, is trying to invigorate cooperation through its maritime vision notably known as "Global Maritime Nexus" despite region's security dilemma. It aims to enhance mutual opportunities for all actors involved at the dispute thereby diminishing any possibility of the worsening power competition. Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as one of regions' most prominent multilateral organizations is expected to be a cornerstone for a more peaceful dispute settlement so it could move forward on fostering members' prosperity and security. However, Indonesia is a sovereign state which must hold their national interests at stake when it comes to any international affairs. It is therefore becoming a challenge for Indonesia on pursuing national interests while maintaining its neutral position as non-claimant state at the same time.

Keywords: South China Sea, maritime, Indonesia

Introduction

The recent massive land-reclamation activity done by China on the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea has alarmed many countries engaged in Asia Pacific region. However, China insisted that maritime reclamation has been part of their life since other countries like Japan has been fortifying the Okinotiri Islands and demanded an exclusive economic zone but the United States has been silent on this matter (Huaxia, 2015). "Nine-dashed line" claimed by China which embraces some 80% of the South China Sea

is described as China's historic waters. This claim has raised an awareness of its neighbour as they believe that they are also entitled to advance natural resources and other potential at the region. Sovereignty claims and energy vulnerability become the two major factors which exacerbate the dispute. As a sea which holds huge amount of potential energy resources, thus it potentially becomes one of the most protracted conflict zones in Asia Pacific where both regional and international players try to assert their unequivocal primacy over the disputed area. There are at least six countries with their interests at stake at the competing territorial and jurisdictional claims in the South China Sea; China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, and the Philippines. Among all claimants, China persistently plays the most of aggressive behaviour proven by the military build-up and public statement by Chinese officials in regard to their reluctance to external parties' engagement, the United States (U.S.) for instance, in the dispute. On the other hand, U.S. argued that they have underwritten regional security for decades patrolling Asia's sea lanes and preserving stability therefore their presence in playing a more contributive roles in the region is needed (Clinton, 2011). Notwithstanding the fact that U.S. was never truly absent from Southeast Asia, the ongoing commitment to its regional allies, and overwhelming maritime military presence – the perception that U.S. role in regional affairs was declining since China was ascending cannot be easily dismissed (Anwar, 2013).

At the height of global power projections, Republic of Indonesia as one of ASEAN's founding fathers who has been actively promoting the principle of non-alignment or notably known as its "non-block" approach in international affairs, has tried to become pioneer in mitigating the potential risks surrounding the region such as initiating the discussions on the formulation of Declaration of Conduct (DOC). However, as a sovereign state, Republic of Indonesia must also have its national interests at stake despite its commitment to contribute on peace and security formation on both regional and international affairs. On October 2014, Indonesia's newly elected President Joko Widodo has announced a new top priority in terms of foreign policy concern emphasizing on the importance of maritime power through officially announced vision of "Global Maritime Nexus" (GMN). Through this vision, Indonesia is expected to play a more contributive role in the formation of regional security and economic. Pursuing national interests while maintaining its neutral position as non-claimant state would be a potential challenge for Indonesia.

This article is structured as follows. Firstly it will explain the global power projections in the South China Sea involving U.S. and China. Second, it will try to portray Indonesia's interests in the region despite its status as non-claimant state, noting a number of economy and security at

stakes. It will finally explain the significance of maritime vision invigorated by Indonesia towards the maritime boundary dispute in the South China Sea. My argument on whether or not Indonesia through its maritime vision could maintain neutrality despite global power projection in the South China Sea goes to three significant points. First, Indonesia will strive to maintain good relations with all claimant and non-claimant states involved at the South China Sea dispute in order to pursue national interests at stake. Second, maritime vision could become a strategy to enhance unity among members on Indonesia's closest priority at regional basis, ASEAN, in order to enhance benefits for ASEAN members. Third, this could further reduce the height of great power projection in the South China Sea due to the establishment of potential shared opportunity through cooperations.

I.

The South China Sea dispute which covers the Pratas Islands in northeast, the Paracels in north, the Spratlys in south, and Scarborough Shoal in central east has abundant natural resources and trade potential thereby it is critical for countries surrounding to think about benefit from this area as the means of pursuing national interests. In the unpredictably world constellation where no state can rely on other's assurance in maintaining security, maximizing defence strategy might be best applied by state in ensuring their interests. Thus, China's effort in doing reclamation for any purpose may be taken into account as the logic effort to maintain interests at stake. However, problem has started to rise up when there has been no agreed consensus among all claimants. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) as the generally accepted customary international law is considered as the only credible framework within which any kind of exclusive claims can be made despite the fact that the United States have failed to ratify it (Evans, 2015). China seemingly prefers bilateral layer discussions in mitigating the dispute instead of through multilateral layer such as by ASEAN. It can potentially lead to the imbalance power in negotiation since China's growth militarily and economically may be such a worrisome to others smaller states. Given the fact that two region's most prominent multilateral bodies members', Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN), involve into the dispute as claimants; Vietnam and the Philippines, therefore it raises a big concern for ASEAN to take an initiative step through peaceful arbitration. However, delimitation of maritime boundaries plus the hitherto obscure over the land remains present since there is no agreed law-abiding regulation among all claimants thereby dispute is seemingly conceivable (Hayton, 2014). The latest negotiation process formulated into Code of Conduct initiated by ASEAN member states have brought into such an enormous progress

towards conflict settlement despite the fact that China keeps doing that sort of aggressive behaviour in the South China Sea. However, solutions and problems should be based on law but unfortunately it is not always clear which international law should be adopted (Djalal, 2014). Indonesia, one of ASEAN's biggest members considers about the need of maintaining a peaceful order in regional security more importantly when it comes to any dispute dealing with sovereignty claims and energy vulnerability. As of October 2014, Indonesia's newly elected President Joko Widodo has announced a new top priority in terms of foreign policy concern emphasizing on the importance of maritime power through officially announced vision of "Global Maritime Nexus" (GMN). Through this vision, Indonesia is expected to play a more contributive role in the formation of regional security and economic.

Research and attempts pursued by both academicians and think-tanks in order to examine state's national interests have been helpful in obtaining the significance of maritime power as one of defense strategy tools. Started from the basic assumption of world politics according to neorealist which believed that an anarchic international system is a source of conflict, thus state faced a condition to which they need to make sure that they are safe from other state's intention. In order to strive a security attainment from any plausible attack, both groups and individuals living such a constellation are therefore driven to acquire more and more power in order to escape the impact of the power of others (Herz, 1950). Thus, maximizing efforts to prepare for the worst circumstance led by insecurity is rising as no state can be certain about their security at stakes. I would argue that this action is justifiable as long as it does not threaten other neighbours. Therefore, Jervis's findings that an increase in one state's security decreases the security of others, notably known as central point of security dilemma (Jervis, 1978) might be taken into account in understanding the basic idea on analyzing state behaviour on security matter. Nonetheless, I believe that one state's security increase is not only decreasing others' security but also themselves in the first beginning. Once state 'A' increases their security preponderances by the means to make them safe from other's attack, it will trigger other states, name it state 'B' to therefore feel insecure due to its vulnerability thereby implying them to increase security as well. It will in return increase state vulnerability and automatically decrease its security.

International system which consists of states and organization established imply to the existing anarchic system, for it lacks an overarching supranational government, but is not chaotic thereby system is defined by its key actors, their interactions, hierarchies of power, and influence among them (Clemens, 1998). As the consequence of uncertain strategic situation, security dilemma is formed as a type of insecurity dynamic between states

thereby state’s knowledge of the other state’s motives is important in order to engage in the worst-case scenario planning (Glaser, 1997). Geoffrey Till coined an idea that sea power holds four historic attributes intimately connected with each other, and each also exhibits the same cooperative and conflictual tendencies characteristics of international relations as illustrated in the figure below (Till, *Seapower*, 2004)

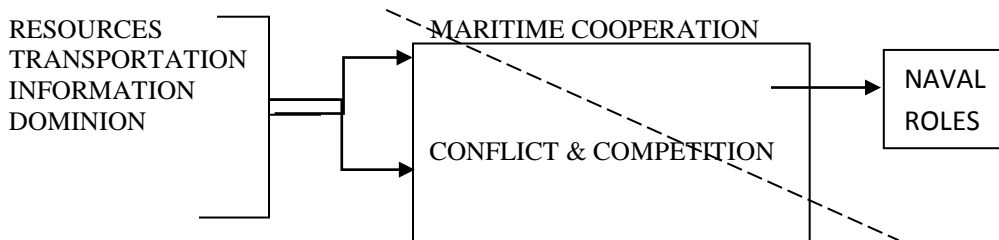


Figure 1. The Four Historic Attributes of Sea

Given the fact that sea possesses a huge amounts of resources providing high road to prosperity, the need of making the most of it also increases. In order to get enormous profits, it is important to make sure that a highly developed technology for transportation is applied. Furthermore, making sure its safety from such threats is another crucial point which needs that sort of sharing information with other actors playing within. However, dominion is seemingly inevitable since actors hold maritime strategies as Till further argued include assuring sea control, projecting power ashore in peace and war, attacking and defending trade, directly and indirectly, and maintaining good order at sea. Finally, naval roles will depend on the scale of either maritime cooperation or conflict and competition which potentially arise.

Global power projections in the south china sea

The South China Sea has turned into an area where contested primacy of major powers plays. The notion of US Rebalance to Asia vis-à-vis China Peaceful Rise which has been predominantly marked by mistrust often leads states to face security dilemma. It is therefore reflected in the defence strategy in order to ensure countries’ interests from being taken by others. However, leaning to one side is not an option for Indonesia to maintain their security at stakes.



Figure 2. Map of disputed area in the South China Sea (Economist, 2015)

Picture above depicts the disputed area which has increased states' security level in the region. If parties involved keep assert their power leverage through for instance China and its reclamation at Paracel Islands, I would predict a conceivable predicament surrounding the South China Seas could grow worse in the couple years ahead.

US Rebalance to Asia

One of the most illuminating statements delivered by US Secretary of Defence Ash Carter on his remarks on the next phase of the U.S. Rebalance to the Asia Pacific is:

“Asia Pacific is the defining region for our nation’s future given a few data points: half of humanity will live there by 2050, even sooner by 2030 more than half of the global middle class and its accompanying consumption will come from there, and there is already home to some of world’s largest militaries and defence spending.” (Carter, 2015).

After U.S. ages war in Middle East, U.S. is now thinking about pivot point in Asia since it is considered as one of the key drivers of global politics. However, China’s rise has therefore led U.S. to think about strategic implication which implies into the increase of military presence which U.S. has in the region. This condition of security dilemma which occurs due to an uncertainty in international relations has worried U.S. so that expanding military presence is a critical thing to do in order to secure their interests at stake in the region. U.S. engagement in the region is seen in their involvement in the establishment of APEC Leaders’ Meeting and other form of cooperation such as ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN plus Three, and East Asia Summit. This form of cooperation could be interpreted as insecurity dynamic reflection in U.S.’ strategy by knowing other state’s motives better so that they could engage in the worst-case scenario planning

due to the rise of China. U.S. also needs to ensure their energy security as Kent Calder, an American scholar has argued that the “radical energy vulnerability” of key states in the region and the rise of China as both “an emerging superpower and an emerging competitor...for potentially tight regional energy supplies” compounds the potential for energy to become a “catalyst for regional conflict” (Calder cited in Stares, 2000). It therefore suggests the idea proposed by Till (2004) on how resources drives state to either engage in any sort of maritime cooperation or conflict and competition. U.S. somehow plays a seemingly more balance action by establishing cooperation despite the fact that this condition might trigger competition in the region due to the unbalance economic power between U.S. and other Asia Pacific regions mostly developing states.

China Peaceful Rise

China as one of regions’ wealthiest country still needs its dependence on imported sources of energy. Since 1993 they have been a net importer of oil and since 1996 has become a net importer of crude oil. The major Asia Pacific sources were Indonesia (6.30 Mt) and Vietnam (1.01 Mt) and it will likely continue to grow in the future (Shixian, 2000). Table below illustrates the energy net import projections of China:

	Unit	2000E	2010E	2015E
Energy Net Import	Mtce	27.00-33.37	124.04-146.41	226.23-291.13
Coal	Mt	2	4	5
Oil	Mt	35.00-40.00	90.00-103.00	125.00-145.00
Natural Gas	Bm ³	1.2-2.0	17.0-22.0	60.00-90.0

Figure 3. The energy net import projections of China

Source: Author’s projection based on *China’s statistical Yearbook 2010* (Shixian, 2000)

NOTE : Coal net import is minus; it refers to net export

E: Estimate; bm³: billion cubic meters, Mtce: million tons of coal equivalent; Mt: million tons.

This situation, in turn, will contribute and complicate the problem of existing maritime boundary dispute in the South China Sea as China’s heavily dependence on the energy import from Southeast Asia countries is facing U.S. who also asserts their rebalance in Asia, more specifically to the importance of future energy demand. It is worth noting that what is unfolding in Asia is a race between the accelerating dynamics of multipolarity, which could increase the chances of conflict, and the growth of mitigating factors which will dampen and improve potential continuing peace on the region (Friedberg, 1993-1994). The dynamic of security dilemma-driven action-reaction is seen in the economic and military competition which both US and China assert. Given the high tension of competition, both states actually need to make sure that their policy and

actions over the South China Sea is in line with the principle of peace. Miscalculation would lead into the risk of unintended escalation in the future. Even though China keeps insisted that they will never jump into the harsh conflict when it comes to any dispute, yet their behaviour through People Liberation Army (PLA) modernization and other assertive responses in the South China Sea showed that they hold huge amount of interests at stake there. Fu Ying, a spokeswoman for the National People's Congress on March 3, 2015 stated that:

“As a large country, China needs the military strength to be able to protect its national security and people as our history teaches us a lesson that when we lag behind, we come under attack. We won't forget that. Furthermore, we need to continue modernizing armed forces since there was still a gap between us and other countries in terms of military equipment” (The Wall Street Journal, 2015)

It strongly depicted a possibility of arm races in the region which may involve China and U.S. as the regions' most powerful actor. In regard to the South China dispute, China persistently shows an assertive behaviour seeing by the latest reclamation done in the Spratly Islands. This has raised U.S. concern by Republican Senator John McCain and Democrat Jack Reed who sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and U.S. Defence Secretary Ash Carter by stating that U.S. should build a strategy that includes measures to “slow down or stop China's reclamation activities there by whether releasing intelligence about this activity more frequently or stop certain types of security cooperation with China is they don't stop (Brunnstrom, 2015). Indonesia as one of the natural leaders in the region tries to response the heightened power competition between U.S. and China in these particular situations by enunciating maritime cooperation which may lessen the possibility of great power projections in the region as states are more likely to cooperate instead of competing.

Economic and security interests vis-a-vis non-claimant status

Indonesia has declared its position as a non-claimant state in regards to the South China Sea dispute. It is stated on Indonesian President Widodo statement in an interview with the Yomiuri newspaper:

“One of China's claims to the majority of the South China Sea has no legal basis in international law, but Jakarta wants to remain an “honest broker” there. We need peace and stability in the Asia Pacific region. It is important to have political and security stability to build up out economic growth. So we support the Code of Conduct (of the South China Sea) and dialogue between China and Japan; and China and ASEAN.” (Widodo, 2015)

However, it does not literally mean that Indonesia has no interests at stake in the region as according to Lloyd national interests are the wellspring from which national objectives and a grand strategy flow (Lloyd cited in Sumakul, 2013). In order to prosper the nation, it is important for a country to safeguard their national interests which imply on the formulation of integrated defense and foreign policy. Indonesia has been playing an active role as honest broker during the dispute. Recent nine dashed line published by China has alarmed Indonesia as it overlaps with Indonesia's EEZ and Continental Shelf. Indonesia's vulnerable position is tested after China's nine dashed line claim overlapping Natuna Island. In July 10 2015, Head of Indonesian State Ministry of Development Planning Andrinof Chaniago and Indonesian Ministry of Defence have agreed upon an establishment of military base in Natuna Island as the means to safeguard Indonesia territorial from any plausible threats due to maritime boundary dispute in the South China Sea (KOMPAS, 2015). It shows Indonesia's effort to assert their naval roles in response to make sure its safety from the danger of power dominion at the sea.

The 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) sets out what maritime zones may be claimed from land territory, as well as the rights and jurisdictions of states in such maritime zones (Beckman, 2015). Indonesia has been actively contributing towards a dispute settlement through its role as third party. In its annual press statement, Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Retno Marsudi emphasized that through ASEAN, Indonesia will continue to actively engage for the full and effective implementation of Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), as well as the early conclusion of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (Indonesia, 2015). In spite of Indonesia's claim of not being a claimant at the dispute, national interests which are always detached in every country's policy action drives Indonesia to concern on their challenges and opportunities in the South China Sea. When states are facing security dilemma, a condition in which they are unsure of other intention while at some points need to reassure their positions, they would formulate some sorts of policies which involve all resources to safeguard national interests. Indonesia, however, hopes to maintain good relations with two great powers as they get benefits from these bilateral partnership. There are three layers of benefit which Indonesia will get: (1) In the South China Sea, (2) Indonesia-U.S. partnership, and (3) Indonesia-China partnership.

First, South China Sea as the semi-enclosed zone holds a huge potential resources. Being in a line where four Sea Lines of Communications (SLOC) met, really makes Indonesia lucky. It would benefit the country if government could effectively maximize all potential

covering geographic, economic, as well as political as it has been enunciated in maritime vision through GMN. The rapid economic growth which increases in demands for gas and oil has increased the need for new resources for sustaining economic development (Sukma, 2010). Not surprisingly, South China Sea becomes one of the most contested lands due to the strategic position of chokepoints which becomes a critical part of global energy security because 63% of petroleum and other world's oil production transported through maritime routes (EIA, World Oil Transit Chokepoints, 2014). Surrounded by six choke points notably known as Strait of Malacca, the Singapore Strait, the Sunda Strait, the Lombok Strait, the Ombai Strait, and the Wetar Strait which are all used for international navigations make Indonesia seems to be so lucky. Indonesia is now aware about the importance of prioritizing maritime sector as the strategy to alleviate nations' power. Moreover, one-third of the world's liquefied gas passes through the Straits of Malacca and into the South China Sea which becomes the shortest sea route between African and Persian Gulf suppliers and Asian consumers. U.S. Energy Information Administration reported that by the end of 2011, trade through Malacca was greater than 15 million bbl/d or about one-third of all seaborne oil (EIA, 2013). Thus, it becomes important for Indonesia to get benefits from this position for their trade and commerce lines. Apart from that, one of the biggest straits called Lombok Strait located in Indonesia is notably known as the wider, deeper, and less congested route than Strait of Malacca so that it will be beneficial for any trade routes. About 3,900 ships transit the Lombok Strait annually; the total tonnage carried by the Lombok Strait is 140 million metric tons worth a total of \$40 billion (Ho, 2006). It is further argued that tankers which exceed 200,000 DWT have to divert through the Lombok Strait due to the depth constraints of the Strait of Malacca.

Second layer which involves Indonesia-U.S. partnership as it is reported in the fourth Joint Commission Meeting of the U.S.-Indonesia Comprehensive Partnership on February 17 2014 will cover three pillars: political and security; economic and development; and socio-cultural, education, science, and technology (State, 2014). In supporting Indonesia's maritime vision, this partnership agrees upon some points: the selling of Apache helicopters to Indonesia in support of Indonesian Armed Forces modernization efforts to more than \$1.5 billion; Indonesia's national oil company Pertamina announced a 20 year Liquid Natural Gas agreement with U.S.-based Cheniere Energy that would bring up to 800,000 metric tons per year of abundant U.S. LNG to Indonesia for the first time; and improving fisheries management. These patterns would surely bring better prospective investments for both sides given its economic and security benefits.

Third layer involves mutual benefits due to Indonesia-China partnership. According to Rizal Sukma, Indonesian presidential adviser for foreign policy, there are at least three areas where Indonesia's maritime agenda fills in or overlaps with the Maritime Silk Road ideas of Chinese President Xi Jinping namely connectivity, safety, and diplomacy (Gokkon, 2014). In 2013 President Xi Jinping launched Maritime Silk Road (MSR) which envisages a maritime trade network stretching from Beijing, through Indonesian waters into the Indian Ocean and onto the Middle East and perhaps, as far as Europe in where Indonesia would become a major transit point for Chinese trade (Piesse, 2015). It will surely benefit both sides due to its maritime interconnectivity without disrupting the existing SLOC in the region. On March 25 2015, President Widodo at the invitation of President Xi Jinping has agreed on enhancing cooperation in these priority areas: (1) Political, defence, and security, (2) Trade, investment, and economic development, (3) Maritime, aeronautics, science, and technology, (4) Culture and social affairs, and (5) International and regional affairs (Affairs, 2015). Under China-Indonesia Maritime Cooperation Fund (MCF), both agreed to strengthen practical cooperation in navigation safety, maritime security, maritime search and rescue, maritime scientific research, and environmental protection.

Despite its non-claimant status, Indonesia perceives a threat from the realm of balance of power in the Natuna Island thereby it is critical to strive for self-defence strategy as main strategy to maintain national interests. One of the most notable defense doctrines called "Dwi Darma Nusantara" which shapes integration of military component and non-military component has been useful in guiding GMN to defense, protect, and preserve Indonesian national interest. Indonesian national defense was built upon the principles of democracy, human right, public prosperity, environmental preservation, national law, international law and custom, and peaceful live side by side and observe the principle of independence, sovereignty, and social justice (Susanto, 2007). President Jokowi is widely known as new figure in Indonesia political stage despite his previous position as the governor of Jakarta. Compared to his predecessor, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY), who is a retired Army general, they have different focus of foreign policies. President Widodo's maritime ambition in order to transform Indonesia to be a considerable maritime power in the region has been a powerful political commitment for Indonesian naval development which covers these procurement programmes: off-shore patrol vessels, naval aviation, air defence, maritime surveillance, and anti-submarine capabilities (Gindarsah, 2014). It postulates Indonesia's new defence commitment in alleviating its maritime strategy for the pursuit of country's national interest. Even though facing security dilemma, Indonesia prefers to have maritime cooperation

instead of conflict and competition without forgetting the role of naval to safeguard the country. Therefore it proves the first argument on how Indonesia is aimed at maintaining good relations with all great powers while at the same time pursuing national interests at stake.

The significance of maritime vision towards maritime boundary dispute in the south china sea

Jalasveva Jayamahe” (in the ocean we triumph) slogan of Indonesian navy was reiterated by President Widodo in his first presidential speech on October 20, 2014. His obstinacy is supported by the appointed Indonesia’s first coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs, Indroyono Soesilo, who will then assume oversight for the ministers for transport, tourism, energy, and fisheries (Neary, 2014). It is also strengthened by choosing Tedjo Edy Purdijatno, a navy man, in order to be Coordinating Minister for Security of Republic of Indonesia in Widodo’s government and the establishment of new ministry called Coordinating Ministry for Maritime Affairs. GMN strategy, announced by President Jokowi in his speech in East Asia Summit in Naypyidaw 2014, will be undertaken through five key actions covering maritime diplomacy to solve border dispute, safeguarding Indonesian maritime sovereignty and security, securing Indonesian natural resources, intensifying defence diplomacy, and reducing maritime rivalries between major powers through resolution of regional territorial disputes (Neary, 2014). One of the most important points on GMN concept concerning the South China Sea dispute is stated by Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs Retno Marsudi which signalled the intention of Indonesia to give more contribution through bilaterally driven and self-interested approach on diplomacy. It will be applied through continuing pressing on the completion of code of conduct in South China Sea between China and ASEAN (Kemlu, 2015). This vision can be considered as Indonesia’s strategy to play a more contributively role in regional basis while pursuing national interests at the same time. As ASEAN leaders, Indonesia is a strategic place for any sort of international commerce fleeing in the region. In order to apply this policy, there has to be coordinating policies around ministries to articulate the grand design of GMN for instance Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Ministry of Transportation, and last but not least Indonesian Navy. Nevertheless, after 9 months of inauguration, each of the ministry involved in that vision has not released any official blueprint in regard to GMN implementation. In order to respond to the challenges, four broad tiers of decision-making are particularly important: policy making at the level grand strategy, grand strategy making, military policy and strategy making, naval policy and strategy making (Till, 2015).

Living in the midst of great power projections, Indonesia faces security dilemma which leads them formulating GMN as the means to reduce vulnerability and escape the impact of the power of others as Herz (1950) argued on the point of striving security attainment from any plausible attack. Despite all challenges, GMN offers a fresh air to the better opportunities for countries surrounding to cooperate. Beckman (2015) believed that the only viable prospects for resolving the maritime boundary disputes in the South China Sea would be for the Claimant States to enter into Joint Development Agreements (JDAs) which spell out the right of the claimants states to exercise rights to resources in the areas subject to the JDAs. ASEAN countries will benefit from the maritime cooperations if the vision of GMN is fully integrated by the shared opportunities on maritime-based trade and investments. One of the most prominent events which Indonesia will soon engage is their chairmanship role at the IORA (Indian Ocean Rim Association) in 2015. As Till argued on his historical attributes of the sea that transportation and information need to be taken into account in order to enhance maritime cooperation, Indonesia through its chairmanship in the IORA will therefore promote the advanced economic diplomacy through sea power. Indian Ocean will then be projected as the pearl for benefitting countries surrounding. There are some significant points proposed in the National Workshop on the Preparation for Indonesia's Chairmanship in IORA which was held on February 25 2015 at the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; such as the issues on security and maritime safety, disaster risk management, trade facilitation and investment, fisheries management, academic and science, as well as the tourism and cultural exchange (Marsudi, 2015). All of these points are important in strengthening maritime vision and therefore alleviating the number of cooperations among countries in the region. Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Retno Marsudi further argued that as a middle power country, Indonesia's membership in the IORA is not just about what it gets, but rather what contribution can Indonesia give for the organization and world. Furthermore, ASEAN Economic Community implemented in 2015 will become the platform to enhance cooperation as well as investment in ASEAN members. The implementation of Roadmap towards an Integrated and Competitive Maritime Transport in ASEAN will strongly be suggested to benefit its members (ASEAN, 2008).

However, Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN) remains Indonesia's cornerstone of its foreign policy as described as 'the first concentric circle' thereby promoting the idea of an independent Southeast Asia capable of maintaining its autonomy in the face of rivalry is an important task to do (Sukma, Indonesia and the Emerging Sino-US Rivalry in Southeast Asia, 2015). Both Track One and informal Track Two

diplomacy efforts have been conducted in order to solve the dispute through ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the discussion of Code of Conduct to formally discuss the matters between China and ASEAN in spite of Chinese's participation; while the Track Two Workshop was initiated by Indonesia to develop dialogue, confidence building, and concrete cooperative efforts and networking in the South China Sea (Djalal, *Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea: Lessons Learned*, 2001). Despite ASEAN's principle of non-interference when it comes to other internal affairs (Severino, 2000), the embarrassing silence with a six-point consensus in the recent standoff between China and the Philippines over Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea during Cambodian chairmanship on the foreign ministers' meeting has raised Indonesian sense of rescue to hammer out the six points of agreements (Emmerson D. K., 2012). In regard to the dispute, China has made series of compliments sent by the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations to the Secretary-General of the United Nations with reference to the Republic of Philippines Note Verbale no. 000228 on Spratly Island (in Tagalog : Kalayaan) which strengthened that:

“The so-called Kalayaan Island Group (KIG) claimed by the Republic of Philippines is in fact part of China's Nansha Island...The Republic of Philippines' occupation of some islands and reefs of China's Nansha Islands as well as other related acts constitutes infringement upon China's territorial sovereignty” (DOALOS, 2009).

On the other hand, the split among ASEAN members seems to be real. Indonesia who believes on the principle of “independent and active” tried to be an honest broker after Indonesian former Foreign Minister Natalegawa successfully persuaded Cambodian Foreign Minister Hor Namhong to read six-point consensus reaffirming all ASEAN foreign ministers' commitment to observe the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and follow the guidelines for its implementation. Moreover, they also need to work together toward an early adoption of a Code of Conduct to strengthen the 2002 Declaration; to exercise self-restraint and avoid threatening or using of force; and to uphold the peaceful settlement of disputes in keeping with United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea or UNCLOS (Emmerson D. K., 2012). Split within its members is seen in Cambodia seemingly succumbing to China while U.S. supports to the Philippines through defense partnership may help them enhancing national interests. Meanwhile Malaysia, despite its status as claimant state, and Brunei agreed on maintaining some sort of cooperations with China. In June 2013 Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak called for South China Sea claimant states to develop resources in order to protect freedom of navigation and the safe passage of shipping while Brunei and

China agreed to carry out joint exploration and exploitation of maritime oil and gas resources (IISS, 2013). It depicts a fact that the South China Sea would become a test for ASEAN unity in the regional architecture. If this fuzzy situation remain stagnant, ASEAN could end up abdicating responsibility for managing its own regional problems to big external problems (Baviera, 2012). Consensus which becomes “ASEAN’s way” of settling dispute can sometimes be difficult to be achieved as some countries seemingly satisfy their own interests. For a consensus to be absolute, however, all parties must share the same concerns and be willing to sacrifice part or all of their interests for the common cause (Nguyen, 2012).

Thus, the second argument on how maritime vision could become a strategy to enhance unity among ASEAN members suggests a condition that if all members agreed on sharing the same concerns in regard to the South China Sea dispute. As a consequence, the regional architecture would be stronger that later is expected to diminish the potential of great power rivalry in the region. In regard to the heightened global power projection in the South China Sea, some states remain benign as they see more beneficial parts on the potential maritime cooperation while others think about the danger of conflict and competition. At the ASEAN Regional Forum in Hanoi in July 2010, Secretary of State Clinton laid out seven principles guiding the US government’s policy toward the South China Sea. All of these principles are known to provide foundation, though not the sum total, of US interests in the region; these are: (1) Freedom of navigation, (2) Freedom of overflight, (3) Unimpeded commerce, (4) Peaceful resolution of dispute and abstaining from coercion, (5) Conforming claims to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, (6) A collaborative diplomatic process to resolve territorial dispute, and (7) Negotiation of a Code of Conduct. (Bader, 2014)

In order to ameliorate security dilemma, Lindley argued states can focus on such steps; increasing transparency and reassurance in order to reduce anarchy-induced uncertainty by sharing information about each side’s interpretation of the other’s actions (Lindley cited in Liff, 2014). However, there is no guarantee that by expanding transparency and reassurance could diminish all possibilities of potential dispute. This strategy works effectively if only all states bound into that sort of formation agreed upon shared consensus or legal foundations. U.S. who has not ratified UNCLOS yet brings an image on how US is not commitment into the major legal basis of settling dispute even though US insists their peaceful approach would be prioritized instead of arms racing there while China seems to be reluctant in implementing the signed Code of Conduct. Security dilemma is something inevitable as each country must have their interests at stake. The important point is on how these interests do not

overlap and harm other countries through that sort of dominion which might lead into conflict or competition. The idea of cooperation should rest on the equal profits enjoyed by all parties involved. Even though it is not a panacea, Indonesia's maritime vision through GMN could become a way to at least reduce the heightened global power projections and to further avoid the risk of making the South China Sea as the area for contested primacy between U.S. and China. Here are several reasons why Indonesia's maritime vision matters to provide a "buffer" solution amidst the height of great power projections. First, maritime vision as Indonesia proposed through GMN will postulate an idea that economic cooperation would be enhanced in order to bring benefits for all countries surrounding such as those bound into ASEAN as well as U.S. and China. Therefore maintaining good relationship among all actors engaged will be prioritized for the sake of mutual benefits. Jervis (1978) argued that statesmen who do not understand the security dilemma will think that money spent is only cost of building up their arms. It is further argued that adopting more conciliatory posture like meeting the other's legitimate grievances or developing mutual gains from cooperation can somehow increase state's security. Economic cooperations will lead interdependence. If one country has dependence on other, and of course this is driven by national interest, they would therefore seek to maintain a good relationship. Second, maritime security cooperation will provide a space for both great powers and ASEAN members who are mostly developing states to discuss about security threats that they are facing. Considering ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) as multilateral forum, it may be able to help creating a 'situation of equilibrium' among the major powers through the creation of norms and habits of cooperation as to some extent, the ARF is more about engaging the U.S. as engaging China (Acharya, 2001). Moreover, space for sharing information would be better established so possibility of suspicion that usually leads into conflict or competition can be avoided. One of the principles of GMN is to enhance security cooperations with great powers in order to secure the SLOC as it is crucial for all countries involved in the trade and investments there. So maritime vision could be helpful in mitigating the risk of heightened great power projections as all countries share same burden as well as opportunities through a formal partnership on the basis of maritime cooperations.

Conclusion

South China Sea dispute is predicted to be a contested primacy zone for great power projections such as U.S. and China in order to gain their interests at stake in the region due to its potential resources. Security dilemma faced by sovereign states surrounding could possibly lead into two possibilities; either cooperation or competition. The South China Sea

dispute is somehow a test for all actors involved; for China it assesses their commitment to keep relying on the principle of ‘‘China Peaceful Rise’’ without triggering any assertive competition, for United States it tests their limits on presenting ‘‘U.S. Rebalance to Asia’’ without disrupting regional order, and last but not least for Indonesia to successfully achieve their national interests without being involved in worsening conflict escalation. This predicament has led Indonesia as one of regional prominent actors who commits to be non-claimant state to strive for a more cooperative solution in order to reduce the vulnerability of countries surrounding through its maritime vision formulated in Global Maritime Nexus (GMN). Despite challenges and opportunities, GMN could become a buffer solution to enhance unity among ASEAN members since some members become claimant states. Moreover, it would be a mutually beneficial solution for all states involved in the South China Sea dispute to possess shared opportunities due to the maritime cooperations that will allow them to have better transportation and information sharing systems to reduce the potential risk of great power dominion. Therefore, maritime vision invigorated by Indonesia could avoid the undesirable outcomes such as arms races by naval power as states will have a more formal space to know other intentions’ so that direct conflict in settling any dispute might slightly be reduced.

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