

Chapter 4

Conclusion

The question of the extent Islamic groups influences the formulation of the Indonesian foreign policy during the first administration of Joko Widodo was first posed by the writer in the first chapter. To answer the question, the writer used the case of the responses coming from Islamic groups NU, Muhammadiyah and FPI in the issues Uighur crisis and the Rohingya crisis.

Through the analysis and elaboration, the writer has shown that in the issues of Uighur and Rohingya, Islamic groups have an influence in the formulation of foreign policy. This is explained further through the analysis of relations between domestic politics and international politics. In domestic politics, the relations between the Islamic groups and the Indonesian government was analyzed. In international politics, it was between Indonesia and the countries in which the issues take place. After elaboratively explaining using the concept of two-level game, it could be concluded that the influence given by Islamic groups are **different and should always be judged case-by-case**. There are several reasonings that can explain this finding.

Firstly, the influence that the Islamic groups give to the issues are different. In general, their responses towards the issues are the most defining influence the groups can give. The Islamic groups, as a form of an interest group, can shape public opinion. This is important, as in the two-level game, a heterogenous domestic response, a condition in which interest groups and the government is different, will

not be beneficial to the country's position in international negotiation process. It can be seen how in the Rohingya issue, Indonesia can easily negotiate with Myanmar as they do not depend with Myanmar economically; and domestically, Islamic groups are supporting the government's policy. However, the condition is different in the Uighur issue, as Indonesia is dependent with China and having a heterogenous response towards the issue of Uighur will jeopardize Indonesia's negotiation position.

Second, the Indonesian foreign policy is heavily reliant on the current leader's vision for the country. In the case of the first administration of Joko Widodo, he prioritizes economic development and infrastructure. This explains why the foreign policy is very selective and pragmatic. Indonesia chose to be careful in responding to the human rights allegations towards the Uighur by China, as it is one of the top foreign investors of Indonesia. However, as Indonesia does not have any significant economic ties with Myanmar, the Joko Widodo administration is willing to take a braver step, including suggesting a solution to solve the crisis to the Myanmar de-facto leader.

Third, the Islamic organization's influence in the domestic Indonesian political landscape also influences the extent they can contribute to the formulation of foreign policy. The NU and Muhammadiyah, said to be the most prominent Islamic groups in the country, with millions of members, have bigger influence than the FPI. It can be seen through China's invitation for the representatives of NU and Muhammadiyah to visit Xinjiang to see the condition; while the FPI representative was not invited by the government of China. The Indonesian government also

respond more to the request from the NU and Muhammadiyah regarding the two matters.

Fourth, the method in which the Islamic organizations voicing their concerns is also one of the determinants. The NU and Muhammadiyah always use the method of diplomacy and negotiations and constant advocacy when they have any concerns to be said to the government. This led the representatives of the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and also the Chinese Embassy (in the case for the Uighur) to meet and discuss the matter with them. The FPI, on the other hand, chose to do demonstrations that are often heavily politicized. In addition to that, since the FPI is voicing their concerns through means that are out of the formal means (violent demonstrations, for example), the government became more hesitant to meet FPI's demand as it might be seen as if they are justifying those means. Hence, they have not been getting any response from the Indonesian governments or the international counterparts.

However, there are still a lot of rooms that can be explored for further research and to give us deeper understanding, as this one is limited. The influence of other Islamic groups in Indonesia can be analyzed, including the subsidiary organizations for the three groups mentioned here. In addition to that, further research can also touch upon other cases and issues related to foreign policy and Islam in Indonesia, for example Islamic groups' response and the country's foreign policy towards the Palestine independence and relations with Israel. Analyzing other issues related to Islam and foreign policy would give us a better understanding on the stance of Islamic groups in Indonesian foreign policy formulations. Further,

future researches can also touch upon a broader theme, such as the influence of non-governmental organizations (not limited to religious interest groups) to the formulation of foreign policy.

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