

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

The issue of Kosovo has been a concern of the international community for decades, starting from the escalation of conflict in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century between Kosovo Albanians and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavian forces, to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's bombing campaign of Yugoslavia in 1999, up until the unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo in its secession from Serbia in a decade later. Until today, the international community has been split in their reaction to the recognition of Kosovo. Throughout the years, Indonesia has reacted in opposition to the recognition of Kosovo, due to its own national interests.

Kosovo is an area measuring 10.908 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of around 1.8 million people, and has historically held a status as an autonomous region of the Republic of Serbia, its capital city being Pristina. Since the formation of the SFRY in 1945, which consist of six states (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia), Kosovo has fallen under the sovereign territory of the Republic of Serbia. The formal name of Kosovo is Kosovo-Metohija, with Kosovo being the east side and Metohija on the west. (See Appendix A)

The Kosovo conflict occurred during the years of 1998 and 1999, in which ethnic Muslim Albanians combated against ethnic Christian Serbs as well as the Yugoslavian government. Separatist movements of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo reached its peak after the dissolution of the SFRY in the early 1990's, especially after the government of Serbia, under Slobodan Milosević's regime, took away Kosovo's autonomous status in 1989. The Serbian National Assembly had previously emphasized that the cause of the crisis in Kosovo is due to long-standing Albanian separatism, with their ultimate goal being to secede Kosovo from Serbia. <sup>1</sup>

Physical clashes between ethnic Kosovo Albanians, under the Kosovo Liberation Army, with the Yugoslav Army and Serbian police heightened in 1999. The conflict gained widespread international attention and was finally resolved with the intervention of NATO through a bombing campaign against Yugoslavia lasting 77 days from March 23<sup>rd</sup> until June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1999. <sup>2</sup> These NATO airstrikes were ended by the withdrawal of all Yugoslav Army and Serbian police forces from Kosovo, and the entering of NATO forces and the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 as well as the Military Technical Agreement between NATO and the Yugoslav Army in 1999. From then on, Kosovo remained under the administration of the United Nations.

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<sup>1</sup> Heike Krieger. 2001. *The Kosovo Conflict and International Law: An Analytical Documentation 1974-1999*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 301.

<sup>2</sup> NATO. "NATO's Role in Relation to the Conflict of Kosovo." *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*. Available from <http://www.nato.int/kosovo/history.htm>; Internet; accessed 13 August 2017.

There have been international efforts to resolve the Kosovo issue through the International Contact Group, but until 2007, the dialog between Belgrade and Pristina did not bring any results. On February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008, with the support of the United States as well as many other Western states, the Parliament of Kosovo declared its independence unilaterally – a move strongly opposed by its parent state, Serbia.

The same year, the government of Serbia, through the United Nations General Assembly that supported Serbia's motion (UNGA Resolution No. A/RES/63/3, 8 October 2008), submitted the issue of Kosovo to the International Court of Justice to seek for further legal consultation. On July 22<sup>nd</sup> 2010, the ICJ delivered its advisory opinion, which stated that the unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo did not violate any international laws. On the basis of the ICJ's advisory opinion, the United Nations General Assembly issued a resolution that encouraged further dialog between Belgrade and Pristina. Until today, Kosovo continues to gain international recognition, measuring up to 59% of United Nations member states, 82% of European Union member states, 86% of NATO member states, and also 63% of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation member states, acknowledging Kosovo as an independent state. The government of Serbia refuses to recognize Kosovo as a sovereign state, but has begun to normalize relations with the government of Kosovo in accordance to the Brussels Agreement in 2013.

In the last decade, international recognition of Kosovo has been mixed, and the international community remains divided upon this issue. Since its

declaration of independence, international support has grown for Kosovo, with the Republic of Kosova having been formally recognized by 114 out of 193 United Nations member states – Bangladesh being the most recent to recognize their proclamation of independence on February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017.<sup>3</sup> (See Appendix B) Three permanent members of the United Nations Security Council – the United States, the United Kingdom, and France – were quick to recognize Kosovo as an independent state. However, the remaining two UNSC permanent members – Russia and China - were in support of Russia’s continued firmness of sovereignty over Kosovo. Until today, the United Nations itself has always maintained a position of strict neutrality over the status of Kosovo, neither recognizing nor denying it.<sup>4</sup>

Throughout the years, the Indonesian government has maintained its position regarding Kosovo, refusing to recognize their declaration of independence. In discussing on this issue, Indonesian officials have consistently emphasized the importance of the resolution to the Kosovo conflict through consultation and consensus. It has been made clear that Indonesia will not be recognizing Kosovo’s sovereignty as a state until both parties of Kosovo and Serbia are able to reach a peaceful settlement regarding the case. Until that occurs, Indonesia will remain in its position of non-recognition of Kosovo.

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<sup>3</sup> Kosovo Thanks You. “Who Recognized Kosova? The Kosovar People Thank You,” *Kosovothanksyou.com*. Available from <http://kosovothanksyou.com/>; Internet; accessed 17 March 2017.

<sup>4</sup> The United Nations. “Kosovo: The Untold Story of a Diplomatic Breakthrough,” *The United Nations*. Available from <http://www.un.org/en/events/tenstories/08/kosovo.shtml>; Internet; accessed 13 August 2017.

Aside from Indonesia's respect for the importance of peaceful settlement through consultation and consensus, Indonesia possesses its own national interests in its non-recognition of Kosovo. The act of recognizing Kosovo as a state, will instead threaten the national interests of Indonesia – becoming a major reason why Indonesia has remained in its position throughout the years. Simply, the recognition of Kosovo's independence is deemed as not in line with Indonesia's national interests.

Acting as the largest Muslim-populated country in the world, Indonesia has been expected by the international community as well as inside its own country to show solidarity with Kosovo as a predominantly Muslim population. Kosovo, as well as members of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, have lobbied Indonesia in the past to recognize Kosovo's independence as a show of brotherhood among Muslim nations. Furthermore, several pro-Kosovo political parties inside Indonesia, such as Golkar, as well as Muslim groups, such as Muhammadiyah, have also communicated their support for the recognition of Kosovo. The basis of their claims refer to Indonesia's constitution of *Undang Undang Dasar 1945*, which affirms that Indonesia is a country that respects the right to independence of all nations. In their argument, Indonesia should recognize Kosovo as a sovereign state due to every nation's right to independence.

As domestic as well as international pressure to recognize Kosovo's independence continues to rise for the Indonesian government, the proposed study intends to evaluate how Indonesia's national interests have influenced its position on Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence. Along with that, this thesis

will also attempt to explain several theories and concepts of international relations that may be applied to Indonesia's policy of non-recognition towards Kosovo.

## **1.2 Research Question**

The international community continues to be divided on the recognition of Kosovo, in which Indonesia has maintained a consistent stance of opposition against Kosovo's independence. Because of this, there have been a number of domestic and international pressures on Indonesia to recognize Kosovo's sovereignty. However, Indonesia is unable to act in accordance to these pressures, as recognizing Kosovo may end up harming its own national interests.

Thus, based on the problems that exist, this thesis will attempt to provide a systematic and detailed answer surrounding the following main research question:

- a) How have Indonesia's national interests influenced its policy of non-recognition of the unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo?

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

The primary objective of this research is to identify how Indonesia's national interests have influenced its foreign policy position regarding the case of Kosovo. Indonesia's national interests in the case of Kosovo are important to discuss, as they reflect the underlying reasons behind Indonesia's foreign policy position in not only the Kosovo conflict, but also other issues in the international system as well. This thesis will examine why Indonesia acts the way it does in the

issue of Kosovo, and how Indonesia's foreign policy position all traces back to Indonesia's defense of its national interests.

Overall, this thesis aims to describe Indonesia's stance towards the Kosovo issue, as well as understand the underlying reasons behind the position Indonesia has taken, meanwhile proving those reasons are due to Indonesia's national interests.

#### **1.4 Research Benefits**

The benefits that readers are able to obtain from this research among others is that it attempts to expand on the knowledge of the topic of Indonesian national interest and its importance in the decision-making process in the field of foreign policy. Furthermore, there has been limited literature surrounding Indonesia's relations with Kosovo, and thus another benefit of this thesis is to add upon the low number of literature on this topic.

However, the main benefit of this thesis is so that readers are better able to discern the manner in which the Indonesian government formulates its foreign policy based on its national interests, as applied in the case of Kosovo. The issue of Kosovo is significant to discuss, as the so-called country has still not been formally recognized by the United Nations, despite being recognized by a majority of its member states. As an Indonesian, the author believes it is essential to develop a better understanding as to why Indonesia chooses to go against this

and remain in its position of non-recognition towards Kosovo – using theories and concepts of the realist school of international relations.

## **1.5 Structure of Writing**

Throughout this thesis, the author provides a systematic and structured explanation of Indonesia's national interests in its policy of non-recognition of Kosovo's independence in a total of five chapters.

To provide a context to the topic, Chapter One of this thesis first introduces a short narration of the escalation of the Kosovo conflict, the reaction of Indonesia towards this issue, as well as the pressure that has been faced by Indonesia to recognize Kosovo's independence. Chapter One then presents the ambitions of this thesis, through defining its research question, objectives, as well as its benefits.

Chapter Two puts on display the main sources of literature that the author uses in this thesis, classified by the independent and dependent variables of the topic – “Indonesian National Interest” and “Recognition of Kosovo” respectively. The literature review is followed by a detailed explanation of the various theories and concepts that have been used in the analysis of the topic.

Chapter Three of this thesis details the research methods applied in this thesis. This chapter consists of the research approach taken, the types and sources of data that have been used, the technique of data collection and data analysis, as well as the various constraints of this research.

Chapter Four makes up the entirety of the analysis of the data, theories, and concepts that the author had described in the previous chapters. First providing a detailed history of the Kosovo conflict and Indonesia's position in the issue, this chapter explicitly evaluates the relation between the analysis of data and the research question and demonstrates the link between national interest and foreign policy as applied in the case of Indonesia's non-recognition of Kosovo.

Chapter Five provides a comprehensive conclusion of the thesis by critically, clearly, and systematically summarizing the answer to the research question as elaborated in the previous chapter. Additionally, the author also suggests a recommendation to be implemented by relevant Indonesian policymakers.

