

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION**

The conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran is motivated by the prolonged ideological teaching in Islam, Sunnis and Shiites. Saudi Arabia as the birthplace of Islam felt that Islamic teachings should be in accordance with that brought by the Prophet Muhammad, while Iran is an Islamic state that considers the teachings of Islam must be adapted to the development of era so that it is not fully in accordance with the teachings of Prophet Muhammad. This very fundamental difference resulted in both groups being hostile to each other. In ideological conflict, it will not be able to achieve conflict resolution if each side still maintains its conviction and intolerant to the other. The mediator's task in this conflict is to transform the conflict more pragmatically so that each party can reduce the tension to reach a settle agreement.

The conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran reached a peak in early 2016 when the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia cut off the diplomatic ties toward Iran, the severance of diplomatic relations was caused by the Iranian attack on the Saudi embassy in Tehran, then Iran considered was violated Saudi Arabia's sovereignty and Vienna Convention article 22, moreover Saudi Arabia considers that Iran supports the attack. Previously the Saudi kingdom executed 47 terror suspects in Saudi Arabia, one of whom was a Shiite cleric named Nimr Bakr al-Nimr, this execution triggered the anger of the Shi'a population in various areas that led to the attack on the Saudi embassy in Tehran. The kingdom of Saudi Arabia has never tolerated all forms of rebellion in its territory, so Saudi Arabia considers this execution is not due to sectarian factors but it is part of the Saudi kingdom's efforts against the form of terrorism. However, the Iranian government considers that the execution was caused by sentiments against Shi'ites in Saudi

Arabia, so Iran gave criticism of the execution. However, the Iranian government rejected Saudi Arabia's allegations that Iran supported the attack.

Sectarian issues have always been the trigger for rapid conflict in the Middle East region. Forms of conflict resembles the scenario of proxy war post-cold war between the United States and Russia. Both sides sought to strengthen its influence in the region and weaken other, in forms of conflict in other regions such as Bahrain, Yemen and Syria. This conflicts in the Middle East region could endanger the stability of global security because the Middle East region is a region with a strong economy and the world's major oil producer. The internationalization of these conflicts prompted many states to get involved in order to get their interests, including Russia and America which are strong allies of both sides.

A few days after the diplomatic termination by the Saudi Arabian kingdom toward the republic of Iran, the Indonesian government sent the Foreign Minister as a special envoy to deliver a letter from President Joko Widodo containing an appeal to not increase the tension. The Indonesian foreign minister also expressed Indonesia's willingness to mediate the conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Indonesia's willingness is motivated by Indonesia's ability in mediation process of conflict that ever done. Some of the conflicts that managed to reach a settle agreement with the involvement of Indonesia as mediators were the border conflict between Cambodia-Thailand, Vietnam-Cambodia, Southern China's maritime dispute and the Rohingya minority human rights issue.

In the journal “The Concept of Conflict Mediation Process”, Margret Johansen and Cristian Weidlich (2014) explained that to be involved in the mediation process, the mediator must meet several factors. These factors became the basis for an assessment of Indonesia's ability to mediate the conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran which culminated in early January 2016.

The first factor is the approval as mediator. The process of conflict mediation will not be possible if the conflicting parties do not agree to be mediated by the parties that involved in the mediation process. This agreement is determined by the mediator's ability in the mediation process that has been done before, the proximity of the mediator to the conflicting party and the neutrality of the mediator. Indonesia's position now has enough experience in conflict mediation process, especially ideological conflicts because Indonesia is a state with a lot of population diversity. Indonesia's strategy is powerful in the process of resolving ideological conflict. In the international scene Indonesia is also involved in various conflict mediation processes. So, Indonesia has sufficient experience in international dispute settlement.

What is needed in the process of mediating ideological conflict is the transformation of the conflict toward the pragmatic resolution. This transformation approach emphasizes the causes and consequences of conflict. Conflict, of course, results in losses on many factors, both material and non-material. So, the process is trying to convince both parties in conflict to be willing to ease the tension so that the losses that will occur can be minimized and even will be beneficial for both parties if a peaceful agreement is reached. The ability of mediators in this process of conflict transformation is the second factor described by Margaret Johansen and Cristian Weidlich in their journal. Conflict transformation is a conflict resolution method that always undertaken by Indonesia, at the beginning of the conflict Indonesian government usually make shuttle diplomacy to get information directly from the conflict and offer mutually beneficial solution, because prolonging the conflict will increase the amount of loss. The Indonesian government is able to transform the conflict understanding in Saudi Arabia and Iran dispute with pragmatic conflict resolution.

A third factor is Indonesia's ability to control the communication process between conflicting parties. Communication is an important factor in the conflict

mediation process because with well-established communication will result in a good deal. Indonesia's ability in channeling the communication process can be seen from the shuttle diplomacy that was immediately undertaken by the Indonesian government after the conflict. Before the tension increased, it needs the parties that can reduce the tension. In this position the mediator must be able to influence the party in conflict and have good time management. Many conflicts get worse due to improper time management.

Indonesia is a state that has already experienced in conflict mediation process. This experience made Indonesia has a good time management in the process of reaching mutual agreement on the conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Indonesia also a strategic partner for both states, because with the largest Muslim population in the world, Indonesia has a common understanding with Saudi Arabia and Iran. Both states are using system of Islamic government that based in the Quran as the foundation of the state. In bilateral relations, cooperation between both states and Indonesia continues to increase from time to time. This strategic position is an opportunity for Indonesia to be able to influence the two states in conflict to achieve an agreement that benefits both parties.

The conclusion of this undergraduate thesis is that Indonesia has qualified qualities to engage in the mediation process of conflict between the kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Iran so that the Indonesian government offering to become a mediator. Indonesia's experience in the conflict resolution process were in Cambodia-Vietnam, Thailand-Vietnam border conflict, South China Sea territorial dispute and Rohingya minority human rights issue. Indonesia also has a strategic position that can be exploited to influence policies made by the kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Iran. This strategic position includes closeness in the majority of the Muslim population, bilateral cooperation and strategic position in the ASEAN region.

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