

CHAPTER IV

RUSSIAN INTERESTS TOWARDS UKRAINE

Chapter IV is a discussion that will answer the research question of this research, namely the important reasons that caused Russia to take a decision in its foreign policy to intervene in the Ukraine Crisis. Decision making process is the most important thing in foreign policy, because in the decision making process there are many considerations regarding the interests and consequences that will be obtained if the policy is implemented. This chapter describes Russia political, military, economical fundamental interest, capability and information. So, from these three things, the researchers obtained answers to the causes of Russian intervention in the Ukrainian crisis.

Basically, fundamental interests are the main interests and are considered very important in the sustainability of a country. In this case, Russia's fundamental interest is in its national interest. Russia's national interests are a combination of the interests of individuals, society and the state in terms of economic, domestic politics, social, international, informational, military, border, environment and another sector. This national interest is protected by state authority institutions. Individual interests are usually the use of constitutional rights and freedom in maintaining security; in improving the quality and standard of living; in physical, spiritual and intellectual development as an individual and citizen. Society interests are usually in the form of strengthening democracy; in law making and social statements; in gaining public harmony. Whereas the state's interests are usually in the form of a constitutional system that cannot be changed, full sovereignty of Russia and territorial integrity; in achieving political, economic and social stability; the right to absolute freedom to the law and rules; and to enhance profitable international cooperation. In this study, of course the interests in question are the interests of the state in the form of full sovereignty, territorial integrity, achievement of political, economic, social stability and also beneficial international cooperation.

In making a military policy, state should consider its military capabilities. However, even military capabilities must be supported by economic capabilities to fund all military policies that will be carried out. Even in the current international system, state power is not only based on military capability, but also economic capability. Specially to consider the economic impact on trade relations between the two countries. Thus, after considering the fundamental interest researching would like to recognize the capability consideration that affect the policy of intervention.

4.1 Russian Political-Military Interest

In the political interests, researchers argue that Russia is trying to maintain its role and position as a country that has a super power in the world in the term of politics. Russia, which has historically been a ruling country since the Russian Empire to the Soviet Union, tried to maintain its role. Politically, Russia used to want to form a Union called the Soviet Union. However, the Soviet Union collapsed after the cold war and broke its states, including Ukraine. Although these countries have been independent and independent, Russia wants to show that its influence is not lost (Golani, 2011).

NATO member states and the European Union actually work together in inviting cooperation or providing assistance to the countries of the former Soviet Union, from bilateral cooperation to the provision of scholarships to the youth. In this case, including Ukraine. The importance of Russia's political fundamentals is slowly starting to be threatened if Russia does not respond and make a foreign policy. The crisis in Ukraine is the right moment to prove Russian influence and stop NATO expansion. In addition, Ukraine itself is a buffer zone between Russia and the European Union, so Ukraine must be protected so that Russia's political and military interests are safe.

Figure 4. 1 Strategic Position of Ukraine



Source: *britannica.com*

In over the course of several years, the European Union had the notion to befriend the non-EU countries surrounding them, this particularly focuses on the eastern part of the European continent. As mentioned in the European security strategy, the EU needs to extend its arms to neighboring countries to acquire many more political and economic partnerships (European Union, 2003). The fragmented states that were a part of the Soviet Union had many political uses for the EU. The formulation of an EU policy towards these region countries was further complicated by their close ties with Russia, which was determined to keep the former Soviet areas within its sphere of influence.

Within the regional cooperation, Ukraine is regarded as one of the key states of the Eastern Europe. In particular, such a role is given to Ukraine within the Eastern partnership initiative, which is regarded as the next stage of the integration between the EU and the East-European states. The model of EU-Ukraine relations (the Association

agreement, the FTA, gradual visa liberalization, border management cooperation etc.) is represented as an example for strengthening cooperation between the EU and other recipient states of the Eastern partnership (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, 2012).

The EU offers for its neighbors a privileged relationship, building upon a mutual commitment to common values (democracy and human rights, rule of law, good governance, market economy principles and sustainable development), however the most important factor – future membership in the EU – is not an objective in this case. Already mentioned analysts argue that the main common denominator in the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) is the extension of EU values and norms to neighbors through conditionality. Whereas conditionality has worked effectively for countries that have had membership within reach, there is no evidence of effective conditionality in other EU external relations. They notice how the ENP without membership on offer can avoid establishing new divisions in Europe (Gromadzki, G, Lopata, K, and Raik K, 2005)

According to Benita Ferrero-Waldner, European Neighborhood Policy is a strategic policy to support the reform agenda in EU partner countries and bring more prosperity and stability to Europe's neighborhood. The implementation of Action Plans is supported by significant EU assistance, through the new European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument, the EU will provide almost 2 billion Euros in grant assistance in the neighborhood until 2013. That is 32% more than in the previous financial framework to support reform priorities and build stronger Cross-Border Cooperation. In 2007, 144 million Euros in European Commission (EC) assistance has been allocated for Ukraine (120 million Euros under the National Program and 22 million Euros from the Governance Facility). EC National assistance budgets to Ukraine have tripled over the last years from 40 million Euros in 2002 to 120 million Euros in 2007.

First is about its image as Great Power. Since mid-2003, Russia's policy is transforming. With good cooperation and adaptation after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia experienced economic improvement. However, this creates a stronger desire to restore its major role in history as an Independent Great Power and to restore Russia's image which has been considered weak since 1991. Russia's desire is deeply felt in the international system. If Russia makes a firm and strong stance, this will certainly have an impact on the return of Russia's image as Great Power, and this is an advantage and honor in today's multi-polar international system (Gannon, 2001).

Ukraine is seen as an important actor which could have a positive impact in solving the Transnistria conflict. EU identifies important role of Ukraine in strengthening cooperation on regional and international issues, conflict prevention and crisis management. According to the EU-Ukraine Action Plan, "Ukraine will continue its constructive efforts as mediator in the settlement process to solve the Transnistria conflict in Moldova".

Therefore, the question why is it important for the EU to recognize Ukraine as a major regional player in relation to other Eastern neighbors of the Union pertains to several important reasons. First, the strategic importance for the EU is to strengthen and ensure prosperity and security in the neighboring countries. Second, it is in order to settle frozen conflicts in the Eastern neighborhood with the valuable support from Ukraine. Thirdly the security of energy supply to the EU countries from Russia through Ukraine. It could be one of the most important issues in relations between EU and Ukraine. As mentioned in the European Security Strategy, energy dependence is a special concern for Europe. Europe is the world's largest importer of oil and gas. Imports account for about 50% of energy consumption today. This will rise to 70% in 2030. Most energy imports come from the Gulf, Russia and North Africa (European Union, 2003).

Russian power has decreased since the Soviet Union collapsed and turned into the Russian Federation and several other independent countries. Its smaller area also shows that its influence is starting to decrease in the neighbor countries. This has become a serious consideration when NATO and the European Union began to approach the former territories. When the international system changes from bipolar to multipolar, Russia try to balancing the power of NATO that widening its power and maintaining its power in the countries of the former Soviet Union. Thus, with its intervention in Ukraine will reduce the expansion of the West.

While Russian military interests refer to more strategic matters and more specific interests, the Crimea Peninsula and the Black Sea. The Crimea Peninsula is a strategic place to put the navy on the Black Sea. Since the era of the Soviet Union, many ethnic Russians have lived in the region to work as navies and sailors. One of the Russian navy bases is located there, so Russia always maintains good relations with Ukraine. This good relationship changed when President Viktor Yanukovich was no longer in power. Western-leaning Ukraine will be a threat to the Russian military in the Black Sea. Thus, if Russia cannot have Ukraine, Russia will fight to own Crimea. This proven by Russia's actions in inserting its military into Crimea after the Ukrainian government fell. Military bases that are also close to the buffer zone area must be protected to protect the main territory. Researchers believe that if Ukraine falls to the West, this is a big threat to Russia and Russia does not want it to happen. Major threats, especially those that also threaten the military must be solved immediately. For this reason, this policy appears under the president's command to protect national security and Russian military interests in its strategic areas. Many countries consider that this Russian policy is violating the international law and condemn-able, but Russia believes that this policy must indeed be done to protect national interests and security (Golani, 2011).

Russian security at the border, this border is not only with countries in the Europe, but also in the Americas, Asia to the Middle East. The Soviet Union has declared Absolute Security against all its vast borders. Absolute Security is a security policy against its neighbors and cannot be renegotiated because Russia feels surrounded by many countries and is not safe (Oliker, 2015). Thus, imperial expansion carried out by Russia is the way Russia protects itself against invasion from the outside. This is supported by rationality that if Russia does not expand its power, other countries that will do it against Russia.

Figure 4. 2 Strategic Location of Black Sea



Source: simple.wikipedia.org

The matter of Russian occupation of the Crimea Peninsula and problems with the Russian navy in the Black Sea, Russia is trying to gain profits from a geopolitical point of view. Crimea is a strategic area for security and military. To achieve this, Russia upholds the values of independence

written in the Basic Law of the Russian Federation in defending of the rights of the Crimean people which the Ukrainian government ignores.

Geopolitically, Russia has an advantage because it has many ethnicities that still support Russia, so that Russia's entry into Ukrainian territory can be accepted at the right momentum. This Russian interest does not only stop at influence, but also has reached a wider systemic level, which is about NATO. From this point, Russia's interests have been categorized as military interests, because it concerns the national security of the country. Russia will not commit to voluntarily join NATO or the European Union and be under the influence of other countries. Russia does not want to be part of them, but the existence of NATO is felt to become threatening with its members which are also dominated by countries on the European. Russia realizes that its strength and influence are not as big as before, so it will be difficult to compensate for NATO. The existence of NATO is increasingly widespread and increasingly threatens its proximity to the European Union (Pynnoniemi, 2014).

The problem of balance of power with NATO is coming after. Russia does not want NATO to dominate the countries of the former Soviet Union. The expansion of NATO has become a threat to Russia, given the Warsaw Pact has been disbanded. This was even more threatening when the expansion reached the former Soviet Union. Russia's border is an important point for Russia to maintain Russia's security stability. The condition of Russia and its borders today is very unique, Russia's borders have changed a lot in history starting with the victory and defeat of the Muscovy, the expansion of the Russian Empire, during the Soviet Union, Russia's territory has increased and decreased (Oliker, 2015).

After all those military interest, Russia also consider their military capability. Until 2012, Russia had 2,800 tanks, 18,260 infantry vehicles, 5,436 active artillery equipment used. According to *The Military Balance*, there were at least

18,000 tanks, 15,500 infantry vehicles and 21,695 artillery equipment stored in the armory. Some of the equipment is old, but can still be used properly. In 2013, for the armed forces on land, Russia had 285,000 personnel including military service. For the entire army, by mid-2013, it was confirmed that Russia had 700,000 armed forces, consisting of officers, contracted soldiers and conscripts (Hedenskog & Pallin, 2013).

With a large number of armed forces, including the number of conscripted soldiers coming every season, Russia has a large and strong army. This is supported by their military facilities and infrastructure that acquired since the Soviet Union era. However, the army is divided to 4 different districts. The most difficult challenge is the southern district bordering Georgia and parts of Ukraine including Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk.

The Southern Military District is the most conflict-prone district. From occupational cases in Crimea, this district also has a naval base in Sevastopol, Crimea. This district is a military priority in the supply of military personnel and military equipment. The newest and most modern military equipment is always distributed to the southern district first. With this, Russia's position on the southern border is very strong and cannot be compare. This is also a consideration of Russia in carrying out military policies to Ukraine.

This matter very much contrast from Ukraine, according to the report of Ministry of Defense of Ukraine in 2013, the Ukrainian military power which only reached 165,500 personnel. The number of conscripts only reached 5,000 personnel in that year. Compared to Russia which has 285,000 army personnel, Ukraine has only 49,100 personnel. Ukrainian military equipment was only 683 tanks, 1,969 combatants, 379 artillery equipment and 72 helicopters (Ukraine M. o., 2013).

With a comparison of the contrast military power between Russia and Ukraine, Russia is ready to take military actions in order to achieve its interests. Moreover, the

southern Russian military district is the strongest district. Other Western countries are also aware of this so they have not dared to take risks against Russia militarily. Russia has military capability in controlling Eastern Ukraine which was once the territory of the Soviet Union. Russia also has strong security defense indoctrination listed in the defense doctrine. When this is supported by a very strong military capability.

Ukraine and other Western countries have a perception that Russia is still one of the countries that have power in the world. Even though his strength is not as strong as before, but Russia's power is not disappeared. This was a threat when Russia carried out several military movements. With high military capability, there will be war when other countries respond with military means as well. So that other countries will not take military steps in preventing Russia.

Russia considered of this step because it is in line with their interest. Russia dares to intervene because Russia sees victory in its strategy of maintaining its interests in Ukraine. The perception of the West and Ukraine about Russia as a powerful country has caused Russia to believe that Ukraine will not take a large military step. If that happens, there will be a possibility of another World War in Europe. However, the possibility of the success of the occupation of Crimea by Russia is greater and rational, so that eventually occupation takes place.

The possibility that Ukraine is against Russian military efforts, or the possibility that there will be an Anti-Russian alliance is very small, because foreign intervention is usually aimed at humanitarian purposes, not against Russia directly. The entry of the United Nations or NATO into Ukraine is not possible and Russia has a greater opportunity with its influence and strong relation with Ukraine. With information about the instability that exists in Ukraine and also about foreign perceptions of Russia, Russia is ready to face the consequences of the reaction to this intervention.

Even if other countries decide to issue an embargo, it will not have a big impact on Russia because Russia is a

country that has strong economic power. Russia's resources make Russia ready to face all the consequences of foreign policy that have been taken, including Russia's intervention in Ukraine. Russia has considered all the consequences and benefits that will be gained by intervening against Ukraine. Even though many countries reacted negatively by issuing an embargo which caused the value of the Russian currency to fall dramatically, the stability of the domestic economy and the fulfillment of needs could still be well met. In fact, Russian society is not so disturbed because the Russian government is trying to maintain the security and welfare of its citizens.

4.2 Russian Economical Interest

Russia also has economic interests, President Putin stated that within the CIS country there was Russia's strategic interest (Morozova, 2009). This is a big threat if the CIS countries move their direction and join the West. One of the strategic interests of Russia is the gas and oil pipeline in Ukraine. In Ukraine, a lot of gas pipes connecting gas from Russia are sold to the European Union. 80% of Russia's gas and oil pipelines are in Ukraine and over the past few years, Russia has taken advantage of Ukraine's dependence and debt to easily obtain these gas and oil pipeline services (Szeptycki, 2008). If Ukraine integrates with the West, the Ukrainian economy will easily enter the West and will no longer depend on Russia. So far, one of the reasons why Russia is close to Ukraine beside Ukraine has the second largest Russian ethnic population, also because of the wealth of resources owned by Ukraine. Ukraine is a rich country, so Russia will try to maintain Ukraine for its strategic interests and economic interests.

Russia has long felt a special historical connection to Ukraine, which played a central role in Russian national mythology. The Tsar leader grew the idea that Russian cultural roots returned to ancient Greece which settled on the Crimean Peninsula, in modern Ukraine. Since the Naval base

is located in Crimea so that Ukraine becoming the buffer-zone for the Russian Federation.

From the beginning of the Ukraine crisis, Russian interference was about preventing Ukraine from breaking away from Russian influence and falling under what was seen by Moscow as a Western conspiracy which was always harassing to Russia with a hostile government. Russia may have seen this crisis as a make-or-break moment for special connections to Ukraine and wants to intervene not to lose Ukraine permanently. Ukraine as a country with a diversity of resources and industry is depend on Russia and has negotiated with the West about the possibility of intimate cooperation. Ukraine's interests can be seen through the pattern of agreements and cooperation that has been carried out since 2008. If Russia does not have any more influence in Ukraine, it is clear that Ukraine will be more inclined to the European Union. However, due to its strong influence in Ukraine, Russia is very easy to adopt policies relating to Ukraine. Thus, the instability is the opportunity for Russia to maintaining the market of Ukraine. Russian gas and oil pipeline that has always been a dispute between Russia and Ukraine in recent years. 80% of Russia's gas and oil pipelines are built through Ukraine, making Ukraine an important area for Russian gas exports. Russia has taken advantage of Ukraine's dependence and debt to easily obtain these gas and oil pipeline services.

From the pattern of Russia's relations with Ukraine during the Soviet Union, Ukraine is an important resource area and must be maintained. During the Soviet Union, Ukraine supplied resources to Moscow. Besides, the gas pipeline that has been built in Ukraine should not be allowed to lose because Russia's gas sector is one of the important economic pillars in the Russian economy.

Figure 4. 3 Russian Gas and Pipelines Map through Ukraine



Source: longtapipe.com

From the image above, Russian gas and oil pipeline that has always been a dispute between Russia and Ukraine in recent years. 80% of Russia's gas and oil pipelines are built through Ukraine, making Ukraine an important area for Russian gas exports (Szeptycki, 2008). This economic interest is supported by the fact that in the history of the Soviet Union, Ukraine was also a resource-rich area and supports Russian economy. When an economic interest is disrupted, this will affect the country's economic activity. The fact that Russia sent military troops and provided military assistance to separatists in eastern Ukraine showed that Russia's strongest influence was in eastern Ukraine, and the strongest interests were also in the East, including Crimea and the Black Sea.

Russia could have built the gas and oil pipelines throughout the sea rather Ukraine, however the mechanism of building the pipelines is not a simple one. Russia need to develop more technology in order to maintaining their gas and oil distribution to the EU through the ocean and its takes

a lot of budget. Besides, Russia also choose to maintain the pipelines in the Ukraine due to Ukrainian dependency to the gas and oil that they got from Russia that increasing Russia's economic interest ratio in this particular case.

Executing a foreign policy and achieving the interests of a country, it is normal that in the end it will intersect with the interests of other countries. In this case, Russia really understands Ukraine's interests and understands the unstable condition of Ukraine. Ukraine's unstable political conditions show that even part of the Ukrainian stake-holders are in favor with Russia, so that Russia takes advantage of this opportunity and helps separatists in the eastern part of Ukraine.

Military capability is strongly supported by the military budget every year. Military budgets can illustrate how much it costs for the country's military development each year. This matter can also be considered as a benchmark of a country's capability. The Russian Military Budget in 2012 amounted to 1,832 billion rubles. From this budget, Russia spent 1,812 billion rubles on military purposes. That amount is equal to 99 billion USD or 2.9% of its GDP. The Military Budget is certainly determined by the country's GDP annually. From 2013 to 2015, Russia took 3.1-3.8% of its annual GDP. This increased sharply because in the 2000s, Russia only took about 2.7% of its GDP (Hedenskog & Pallin, 2013). While Ukraine in 2013 spent military costs of 14,300.1 million UAH, or about 7 billion USD from the budgeted military budget of 15,281.2 million UAH (Ukraine M. o., 2013). Comparison of 7 to 99 billion is a figure that is very far adrift for military budgets. The numbers that spent in 2014 are not expected to be far from 2013. According to the World Bank's GDP in 2014, Russia reached 1,860,598 million USD and Ukraine only reached 131,805 million USD.

In terms of economic capability, it is also different because Ukraine is a small country compared to Russia which has a large area and population. Besides, Ukraine is very dependent on bilateral trade with Russia. However, the

dependence is not bi-directional, only one way which is the dependent Ukraine. Especially Ukraine's dependency on the energy sector imported from Russia, or imported from Central Asia but must go through Russia. Further, Ukraine has difficulties in finding a market that supplies several products from Ukraine. The market has been Russia. In the end, Russia took advantage of Ukraine's trade relations and dependence to pressure Ukraine. Russia shows its high capability not only in the military but also in the economy.

This capability is supported by Russia's willing and commitment to responsible for its foreign policy and not retreat from the attitude that have been taken. Russia remains strong even though Russia was finally embargoed economically by many countries. For example, after the occupation of Crimea, Russia received many embargoes from the United States and European countries. However, Russia can still hold on with its economy to survive in the international community. Otherwise, Russia provides a food embargo on the countries that give sanctions. This food diplomacy has succeeded in weakening food needs in several countries in Europe.

The fact that Russia domestically has a strong economy is a symptom of Russia is being able to fulfill all its economic needs. This strong economic power can also support Russia's military capabilities, because Russia also produces its own military. Adequate military budget, a strong domestic economy, and its capabilities in the military field make the policy taken very profitable for Russia.