

CHAPTER II

THE BEGINNING OF INDONESIAN CITIZENS IN MINDANAO AND THEIR BILATERAL RELATIONS

This chapter aims to explore the origins of the arrival of Indonesian citizens to Mindanao Island, Southern Philippines, where there are several perspectives from different points of view in explaining its history. This chapter also explains the life history of Indonesian citizens while in Mindanao, Southern Philippines. It also later explains about the bilateral relations between the Indonesian government and the Philippine government.

A. The Arrival of Indonesian Citizens to Mindanao, Southern Philippines

1. The first opinion which is based on stories from ancestors

Generally, Indonesian citizens who come to Mindanao region of the Southern Philippines are residents from the Indonesian border, especially from the Sangir and Talud Islands, North Sulawesi Province. The community has lived and settled in the area for decades, even the majority of its citizens have been born in the border area between Indonesia and the Philippines and have several descendants who also live in the area without obtaining a clear citizenship status from the local government. The arrival of Indonesian citizens into the Mindanao region, the Southern Philippines has recorded a history of more than three generations, among are:²²

a. The first generation in the 1930's

Indonesian citizens who came to this era in general they were born and grew up in the Philippines with a very minimal provision, but they only prioritizing energy to fulfill their needs. Almost all Indonesian

²² Alam, E. S, "Menyibak Tabir WNI". Konsulat Jenderal Republik Indonesia Davao City.

citizens who entered this period did not get enough education and did not have sufficient skills. Therefore, they live in the Philippines only to be a farmer, fisherman, and unskilled laborers as their livelihoods because of the lack of knowledge and skills they have, while competition in finding jobs in the Philippines is very strict which prioritizes higher education graduates by having skills that focus on a particular field.

b. The second generation in the 1960's

The condition of Indonesian citizens in this era is almost the same as the previous year's generation, which is still a backward society with the weak education and knowledge they obtain. It can be proven that there are still many people who are illiterate and not fluent in using Indonesian language. In this period, Indonesian citizens who lived in the Mindanao region could be said to have not received prosperity in their lives. Almost all of them become isolated groups because of several factors related to poverty and ignorance. In fact, with the lack of knowledge that they have, Indonesian citizens who are in the region still use the old mindset to solve personal problems in their lives, they have not been able to handle it themselves because they have not used rational reasoning. However, with all the weaknesses that include educational factors, it still uses the old mindset, to the welfare that has not been obtained by the community, in this era the community has experienced a slight increase in the economic aspect. In fact, they have been able to develop their thinking to plant coconut plants because the climate in the region is very suitable for crops like oil palm, although in that year the income they earn is not worth the amount of hard work they do.

c. The third generation in the 1970's

In this generation, the condition of Indonesian citizens experienced a significant increase in the aspect of economics and education. They realize that someone

who has high education, in the future, can have a positive impact on the welfare of his life. Therefore, they slowly change their lifestyle by socializing and establishing brotherly relationships with local people and good ethics, and diligently seeking information about job vacancies that match their abilities. Their economic conditions have also improved because the coconut plants they planted since a few years ago have been fruitful, so they can pick and sell them to the surrounding community to help them meet their daily needs. Thus, it can be said that the condition of Indonesian citizens in this generation has increased despite minimal income as coconut farmers, factory workers and traditional fishermen.

d. The fourth generation in the 1980's

In this generation is the year where the beginning of the movement of people from one region to another with the aim of finding a livelihood that is more feasible than before. Daniel Brillman, who was one of the Dutch Missionaries who served on Sangir Island from 1927-1936, wrote in a book on the History of the Gospel Message at Sangihe-Talaud Island that in 1687 the Sangir Talaud community had come to the Philippines region. Thus, there are several reasons why Indonesian citizens choose to come to the Mindanao region, the southern Philippines, among others:

Firstly, based on the history in the map, it can be seen that there is a close distance between the Sangihe-Talaud Islands, which are Indonesia's northern border areas with Balut Island and Sarangani Island. The closeness of the distance between the two regions makes one of the factors a greater possibility for people to visit each other. The proximity of the distance between the two regions is basically one of the causes that the greater the likelihood of the population between the two regions to visit each other. The activities which eventually

became a habit of the local population eventually took place continuously until now. Thus it can be said that the brotherly relationship between them which came from two different islands was in fact very strong. This can be proven that one of the tribes in Mindanao, which is the Sangil tribe, has admitted that their ancestors were indeed from Indonesia. While, based on a book from the history of the Kingdom of North Tabukan on Sangir Island, it is written that relations between kings from the North Tabukan region with kings in the Mindanao region are very intimate, even in the book it is written that the king of the era Tabukan Utara wanted to expand the region is in the Mindanao region so that the brotherly relationship between the two remains well established.

Secondly, the emergence of an opinion that the factors behind the Indonesian citizens to come to the Philippines are about religious factors. At that time, Indonesia was still in a state of colonization by the Dutch which in this situation required all Indonesian people to embrace Christianity. Therefore, in order to avoid being forced by the Dutch, some of Indonesian citizens decided to cross into the Philippines. This is a possible factor in the beginning of the entry of Islam in the Philippines with the provenance of the Sangil tribe which indeed all of their communities are Muslim. So, Indonesian citizens who come to the Philippines are based on religious factors, not about economic factors that are often associated with the problem of population movements. However, indeed for the next few years, especially in the 40s, many Indonesian citizens came to the Philippines with the aim of finding works that are more decent. This situation was caused by the fact that in this era Indonesia's economic condition was still very weak compared to the economic conditions in the Philippines. As such, some Indonesian citizens decided to move to the Philippines because of the close enough

distance and added between the two countries that had a good historical relationship.

2. The second opinion which is based on the history of Tabukan Kingdom in the 13th century

Based on the history, in the 13th century, there was a Kingdom called Tabukan Kingdom which was located on Sangir Island, where its territory covered the entire Sangir and Eastern parts of the island. Buleghan is the name of one of the kings in the region who has a son named Pandiang. Historically, one day Pandiang and some of his bodyguards arrived at the sea in order to find fish on Rainis Island or the Talaud Islands. During the middle of the trip to the Rainis Island, there was a strong wind which caused them to be unable to continue the journey because the boat they were traveling in was swept away in the sea. Then they pulled over at a place called Balut Island precisely in the Tube area that was located near Tinina.

Arriving on Balut Island, they walked around the island where the situation was very quiet because it had not been inhabited by human. They walked and witnessed that Balut Island had very good natural conditions and was suitable for human habitation. After the weather began to improve, Pandiang and some of his bodyguards decided to go back to Sangihe, Talaud and upon arrival at their place of origin, they told the local people about the catastrophe it had experienced when they wanted to visit Rainis Island to find fish. Besides that, Pandiang also told residents that he pulled over on Balut Island where the island had very good natural conditions. Then, a group of people from the Kingdom of Tabukan decided to return to Balut Island together and they returned home with some of the plants they had obtained from Balut Island, such as corn, sweet potatoes, cassava and so on. Thus, the activity was repeated continuously by the local community and since then many Indonesians have come from Sangihe, Talaud visited Balut Island, which in ancient times was called “Marulung”, which means it is

close to the mainland. Based on history, the main purpose of a population visit to Balut Island is to move livelihoods, because of the island's excellent natural potential compared to the island where they live.

3. The third opinion which is based on stories from the ancestors of the Indonesian seafarers

The arrival of Indonesian citizens to the Philippines, especially in the Mindanao region because of the possibility that in ancient times, the ancestors of the Indonesian seafarers had sailed and explored the seas of Indonesia northeast and north to the Philippine Islands and landed in the Mindanao Islands. The ancestors of the Indonesian seafarers who first came to the Central Philippines region in the islands of the Visayas region which included Cebu, Leyte and Bohol were a group of sailors from the Sriwijaya kingdom based in Palembang, South Sumatra. The arrival of the seafarers aims to expand trade relations outside the Indonesian archipelago and on the other hand to seek friendly relations between neighboring countries.

Based on the story of a Muslim from Cotabato named Haji Abdullah that the name of the area "Bisaya or Visayas" was taken from the name of the city "Wijaya or Sriwijaya" in ancient times. However, because the Spaniards came and forced the entire population to become Catholics in the Cebu area, some people from the region fled to the Mindanao, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi area to protect themselves from the Spanish colonies regarding the spread of Catholic religion that had been carried out in that region. However, it is not known with certainty the distance of tens or hundreds of years between sailors from the Sriwijaya Kingdom after returning to their homeland.²³

Whereas in ancient times or in the Hindu era in Indonesia, a group of sailors from the Kingdom of Majapahit

²³ Macario, "The Indonesian Migrants of Davao and Cotabato", <https://kyotoreview.org/issue-7/the-indonesian-migrants-of-davao-and-cotabato/>. Retrieved on November 15, 2018.

in East Java who at that time were very famous for their glory and the rapid development rate before the arrival of Lanon ships from Europe, the sailors swiftly prepared a fleet and brought a marvelous large group under the leadership of a sultan named Gajah Mada. The group of sailors set sail for the seas off Indonesia by heading north, to land on the island of Mindanao, Southern Philippines. The landing on the island aims to expand trade relations outside Indonesia and also to establish friendly relations as a neighboring country. Over time, with the hospitality of the Indonesian people in socializing among the population, in the end there was a mixed marriage between the two inhabitants and produced offspring to this day. The marital relationship that gave rise to descendants with children became abundant today. Information about these descendants has been difficult to trace because those born to this descendant who have lived in the Philippines for a long time have officially become citizens of the Philippines.²⁴

B. The Early Life of Indonesian Citizens in Mindanao, Southern Philippines

Historically, the arrival of Indonesian citizens to Mindanao Islands and the Sulu Islands began since the inclusion of Islam which was first introduced by an Arab aristocrat who had previously lived in Sumatra and Malacca named Syarif Awaliya Karim Ul-Makdum in 1380. After 10 years of the arrival of Ul-Makdum on Sulu Island, there was a group of Muslim scholars from the Minangkabau namely Raja Baguinda who came and married a Sulu nobleman who eventually made King Baguinda becomes King of Sulu. From that time, on Islam spread to areas around the Sulu and Tawi-Tawi Islands to arrive at the mainland of Mindanao. Most of the Indonesian citizens living on Mindanao Island came from Sangir-Talaud Regency, North

²⁴ Sadural, E. "Historical and Cultural Connections Between Indonesia and the Philippines", <https://www.theodysseyonline.com/historical-and-cultural-connections-between-indonesia-and-the-philippines>. Retrieved on November 15, 2018.

Sumatra Province. The large population movement recorded its own history for the Indonesia and the Philippines border region for a long period of time with the aim behind the movement of their livelihoods, which is to get a better level of life than before.

Indonesian citizens who have settled in Mindanao for years without having a clear citizenship status are categorized as “Illegal Entrance”. At the beginning of their arrival they settled in the coastal areas spread in several regions such as Balut Island, Sarangani Island, Glan, Maria and Davao City. With the status of “Undocumented Citizen” for Indonesian citizens living in Mindanao, it turns out that the community becomes increasingly miserable. Most of them face difficulties in finding work, even they must always be vigilant to always avoid law enforcement officials or local government officials because of their unclear citizenship status. The condition of Indonesian citizens became very alarming with the arbitrary actions given by the Philippines, both from the government and from members of the Philippine community itself. Almost all of them find it difficult to get justice and legal protection. If one day they experience crime such as fighting, theft, rape, and murder. In addition, the lack of clarity regarding the citizenship status of Indonesian citizens living in Mindanao allows law enforcement officials in the Philippines to easily accuse them of being Indonesian citizens as members of *Jemaah Islamiyah* or being members of terrorist groups that always terrorize other communities.

Based on the census of the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia, Davao City, in 1991 it was noted that the number of Indonesian citizens living in the Mindanao region of the Southern Philippines was 7152 people and around 1962 was the head of the household. The largest area of Indonesian citizens occupied two islands, namely Balut Island and Sarangani Island, where the island is less than 100 km from Marore Island, and can even be traveled within 4 to 5 hours from Marore Island, Indonesia by motorized boat. In fact, the two islands namely Balut Island and Sarangani Island are two small islands located in the southernmost region of Mindanao and in

general Indonesian citizens living in the area come from the islands of Kawio, Kawaluso, Marore and Miangas.

In 1918, it was noted that there was a group of Indonesian citizens who came to Sarangani Island led by Herman Mahaling until they established a church in the village of Sarangani. This is what made the beginning of Christianity spread in the region to the present day. Based on a survey of the economic life of Indonesian citizens living in Mindanao, they can be classified as poor or pre-prosperous. The majority of Indonesian citizens who came were mostly working as farmers cultivating rice fields and copra farming. In addition, there are some who become fishermen, either fishing for daily needs or as fishermen who work in a Fishing Company in General Santos. Some of them also work as laborers in some factory become domestic helpers and the others become workers in the shops around.

Basically, Indonesian citizens living in Davao Del Norte, South Cotabato and North Cotabato mostly come from Sangir Island, especially in the South Tabukan region, Central Tabukan and North Tabukan, and a small of the population comes from Talaud Island. Most of them work as factory workers, housemaids, shop attendants, and a small number of them work as teachers at the Davao Indonesia School and there are some of them as local staff at the Indonesian Consulate General in Davao City.

The main factor in the movement of Indonesian citizens to Mindanao is because the level of economic life of the Indonesian people is very alarming and still far from prosperity. This happens because of several things which in fact have something to do with each other which includes education, legal status, and social culture and so on. Some of these factors make Indonesian citizens trapped in a scope that makes them miserable lives. If seen from the income side, a coconut worker or farmer only gets an average yield of 3000 piso per quarter, which means equal to 500 thousand rupiah per quarter. The salary of a worker in a factory is around 1500 piso per month or equal to 270 thousand rupiah per month. However, if they work on a daily basis, they can only get 1 sack of rice or corn. Whereas for those who work

as a housemaid get an average salary of 1000 piso per month which means equal to 200 thousand rupiah per month.

Employment that absorbs quite a lot of labor from Indonesian citizens is fishing companies located in the territorial waters of Indonesia and the Philippines. For those who can work in the company, they get a salary of 3000 piso per month, which means it equals 500 thousand rupiah per month. However, there are some of them, especially the men, also worked in a fishing company located in General Santos City. The number of jobs in the field of fishing is in fact not always beneficial for Indonesian citizens, they are also often harmed by companies because they are considered different. There are companies from the Philippines that provide specific regulations for Indonesians who are more severe than employees from the native Philippines.

The lifestyle of Indonesian citizens living in Mindanao seems to be far from being prosperous. The income they earned that day was also used up to meet the needs of the day. So they have no chance to save because the income they get is very minimal. The close relationship between Indonesian citizens and Filipinos seems to make more of those who decide to marry mixed marriages between Indonesia and the Philippines, and unwittingly this can lead to one new culture that comes from a weak economic class.²⁵

On the other hand, Weak education is in fact one of the factors of difficulty for Indonesian citizens in finding work in the Philippines, because there are still many who are illiterate. In 1977, there were 4 Indonesian Basic Knowledge Courses which were located on Balut Island and Sarangani Island. Then in 1980, the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia contributed to develop into have 13 of courses in the Mindanao region. The efforts of the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in making the Indonesian Basic Knowledge Courses had a very good impact on Indonesian citizens living in the area

²⁵ Manigbas, A. M. *“Indonesians in Mindanao”*, <https://www.hurights.or.jp/archives/focus/section3/2016/06/indonesians-in-mindanao.html>. Retrieved on November 16, 2018.

to improve their standard of living. This is because only a small proportion of school-age children can study at the Indonesia School of Davao because the cost of studying there is quite expensive and most students who are able to attend school there are children from the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia who live in the Philippines. Another factor is the use of the language in its delivery. In the Indonesian School of Davao, most of the delivery of the material is in Indonesian language, and even some teachers who teach at the school are specially imported from Indonesia. So, the language factor is also an obstacle for Indonesian citizens to attend the Indonesia School of Davao because they are used to using visual language in their daily lives. However, not a few of those who are able to attend high school and college in the Philippines, they are also Indonesian citizens who still have difficulties in applying for jobs in companies because of uncertain citizenship problems. Thus, many of them who have high educational backgrounds also eventually work as shopkeepers, even though they are domestic servants.

The development of the “Indonesian Basic Knowledge Course” which is spread in Mindanao region is inadequate with the minimum number of staff or teaching staff who are given the task of educating and maintaining the place of the course. While, the living conditions of Indonesian citizens living in Mindanao are far from clean. Most of them do not pay attention to environmental health issues, they do not prioritize clean and healthy living habits. The facility for bathing, washing, and latrine are almost ignored especially in Balut and Sarangani areas. Thus, the region is very vulnerable to diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, hives, malnutrition, and other skin diseases.

Indonesian citizens living in Mindanao are often referred as “Illegal Entrance” status. The use of this status certainly makes a big obstacle to their survival. There are a number of issues that are related and often arise with the use of this status, as in the Philippine Labor Law states that people who do not have clear citizenship status are not allowed to complain to legal

aid agencies in the region. This will ultimately harm Indonesian citizens because the use of the status of “Illegal Entrance” is an excuse for employers from the Philippines to be able to use Indonesian citizens, but they pay it below the applicable salary standard.²⁶ Besides that, Filipino employers also feel fortunate to have laborers from Indonesia, because they think that Indonesian citizens are honest, diligent, loyal, and not many people demand to get a salary increase, for that in fact Indonesian citizens has gained great trust from his employers because of his polite and hardworking personality.

In 1963, the Indonesian government sought to restore Indonesian citizens from the Sangihe Talaud numbering 1382 people to Tahuna or the capital city from Sangihe Talaud district on a Halmahera ship. Then carried out again for the second stage in 1965, a number of 1510 Indonesian citizens departed to Bitung using KM Morotai. However, the Indonesian government's efforts to repatriate its inhabitants were of no use, a few months after the return of Indonesian citizens to their home areas, most of them rushed to return to the Philippines. Therefore, there are several factors that have caused Indonesian citizens to return to the Philippines, among others:

1. There is no readiness in him to re-adapt to the new environment, even though the area is where they live long before moving to the Philippines.
2. There was no follow-up response from the organizers or the government after the repatriation of Indonesian citizens, as if they were only delivered home and then left in the Tahuna and Bitung areas where they actually had no relatives in the area.
3. Lack of counseling or outreach to Indonesian citizens towards the system of returning residents from their original place. Most of the Indonesian citizens who were repatriated

²⁶ Faizza. “*Philippine and Indonesian Governments work together to end statelessness in Mindanao*”, <https://www.unhcr.org/ph/11753-philippine-indonesian-governments-work-together-end-statelessness-mindanao.html>. Retrieved on November 15, 2018.

in stage II with the aim of the Bitung region finally returned to the Philippines. This is because they have been forced by the organizer to return to Indonesia with attractive promises. However, upon arrival in Indonesia they were arrested and imprisoned, because they had demanded an appointment from the Government. So, in this case there is a miss communication or lack of complaining from the government to Indonesian citizens who will be returned to their home countries.

4. When returning residents to their place of origin, the condition of the Indonesian economy is still not stable, even its per capita income is still below the Philippines.
5. These Indonesian citizens find it difficult to find work in Indonesia when compared to the Philippines. They assume that working in Indonesia takes a long time to enjoy the results, such as gardening, farming, and raising livestock and so on. Basically, they are used to the pattern of life in a day's work, they immediately get a salary that day as well as being a laborer or as a waiter in shops.

The Indonesian government's efforts to repatriate Indonesian citizens in the Philippines to their place of origin or commonly referred to as repatriation have been carried out through two stages namely the first with the Indonesian Republic of Halmahera in 1963 and in the second stage using the Republic of Indonesia Morotai in 1965, the Indonesian Republic representative in Davao City opened 3 Republic of Indonesia Border Crossing Station (BCS) in the Philippine border area, among are:

1. Border Crossing Station of the Republic of Indonesia on Mabila Balut Island Davao Del Sur which is currently moving to Batu Ganding.
2. The Republic of Indonesia Border Crossing Station in Nangan, Davao Oriental which is currently moving to Tibanban.
3. Border Crossing Station of the Republic of Indonesia in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi.

Thus, the opening of cross-border facilities raises an advantage for Indonesian citizens who live in the Philippine border area, namely members are likely to those who want to use these cross-border facilities for personal interests, such as visiting their families in the Indonesian border area and also on the other hand it can provide an opportunity for Indonesian citizens who wish to go to Indonesia in groups on their own accord without any coercion from the government. Meanwhile, at the same location, the Philippine Border Crossing Station offices were placed with matters at this Border Crossing Post, among others:

1. Border Crossing Station Batu Ganding deals with border crossers to and from the outer regions of Indonesia, namely Marore Island, Sangir Islands.
2. Border Crossing Station Tibanban has a lot to do with border crossers to and from the outer regions of Indonesia, namely Miangas Island, Talaud Islands.
3. Border Crossing Station Bangao has a lot to do with border crossers from and out of Indonesia, namely Kalimantan Island.²⁷

C. Bilateral Relations between the Indonesian Government and the Philippine Government

The relationship between Indonesia and the Philippines basically are foreign bilateral relations between the Republic of Indonesia and the Republic of the Philippines. In 1949, diplomatic relations between the two countries were officially established until both of them enjoyed in spirit of kinship. Initially, the two countries were the closest allies and the history between the two countries became one of the most important moments in the Southeast Asia region.²⁸ The closeness of the bilateral relationship between Indonesia and the Philippines finally formed an embassy in each of the capitals in both countries, of which Indonesia had formed their embassy in

²⁷ *Ibid.* Page. 32.

²⁸ "Indonesia And The Philippines Have An Allianve In The Works". *21st Century Asian Arms Race*. Retrieved on 7 December 2018

Manila and their consulate in Davao City, while the Philippines had also formed their embassy in Jakarta and their consulates in Surabaya and Manado. As long as the bilateral relations between the two are established, they live it with full enthusiasm in friendly relations with frequent visits between countries which are almost carried out every year. The routine visits aim to ensure that relations between the two are maintained and control each other's situation with the formation of embassies and consulates in each country.

However, good relations between Indonesia and the Philippines did not just happen, several thousand years ago the two countries had experienced a tense relationship due to one thing or another concerning the struggle for power between the kingdoms in both countries. Several years ago, the two countries were colonized by Spain precisely during the Age of Imperialism. However, starting in 1949 Indonesia and the Philippines established close friendly relations until they became military allies by supporting each other's government. In addition, Indonesia and the Philippines have shared land borders in the Borneo region. A result of the temporary acquisition of Sabah in the Philippines which lasted until 2015 eventually became an independent country. Several other bilateral relations between Indonesia and the Philippines, namely the two countries are the founders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and members of the non-aligned movement and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

Bilateral relations between Indonesia and the Philippines are getting closer, even from year to year their bilateral relations are getting stronger. As a proof, almost in year, the two countries held a meeting to discuss developments for their future reach. In February 2018, the two countries attended and officially opened the Indonesia-Philippines Workshop on Islamic Education Cooperation held in Jakarta. The workshop was attended by representatives from Madrasahs in Mindanao-Philippines, representatives of the Indonesian and Philippine governments such as the Ministry of Education from the Philippines, the Indonesian Religious Department, the Indonesian Ministry of

Foreign Affairs and the Philippine Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The workshop lasted two days and was held to strengthen cooperation between Indonesia and the Philippines and to follow up on the launch of Islamic education cooperation by the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs during his working visit to Davao City, Philippines in early January 2018. Through the workshop, the two countries committed to establishing cooperation in Islamic education and will discuss in detail the Islamic education system used in Madrasahs and secondary schools in both countries. Philippine President, Rodrigo Duterte strongly supports cooperation in the field of education, since education is a very important aspect for the life of the next generation of nations, so the two countries agreed to improve the quality of education and graduates of Islamic schools to face this era of globalization.²⁹

In addition, to establish bilateral relations in the education aspect, the Indonesian government and the Philippine government also insist on increasing closer bilateral cooperation in the economic field. In August 2018, the two countries held a meeting at the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jakarta and were attended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Retno Marsudi, and the Philippine Foreign Secretary, Alan Peter Cayetano. At the meeting, the two countries discussed efforts to strengthen bilateral cooperation, especially in the economic field for people's welfare. As one of the issues of concern between the two countries, namely the Roll-on / Roll-off (RoRo) route between Davao City and Bitung to improve the bilateral economy which was agreed last year by the President of Indonesia, Joko Widodo and the President of the Philippines, Rodrigo Duterte. In the meeting, Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi said that increasing this connectivity would

²⁹ Kementerian Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia. *“Strengthening the Relationship, Indonesia-Philippines Promote Islamic Education Cooperation”*, <https://www.kemlu.go.id/en/berita/Pages/Strengthening-the-Relationship,-Indonesia-Philippines-Promote-Islamic-Education-Cooperation.aspx>. Retrieved on December 7, 2018.

increasingly open the doors of trade and encourage increased business activities of the two countries, especially the local community. Until now, total trade between Indonesia and the Philippines has increased by 22% in 2017 with a total value of US \$ 7.48 billion. While in the investment sector, the two countries are exploring their respective economic potential.³⁰

³⁰ Kementrian Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia. “*Welcoming the 70 Years Anniversary of Bilateral Relations, Indonesia-Philippines Tightens Economic Cooperation*”, <https://www.kemlu.go.id/en/berita/Pages/Welcoming-the-70-Years-Anniversary-of-Bilateral-Relations,-Indonesia-Philippines-Tightens-Economic-Cooperation.aspx>. Retrieved on December 7, 2018.