

CHAPTER III

THE EMERGENCE OF RUSSIA-SYRIA- IRAQ-IRAN ALLIANCE

In this chapter there is description about the emergence of Russia-Syria-Iraq-Iran alliance this describes the initiation of alliance formation and the alliance point of agreement.

A. The Initiation of Alliance Formation

Russia-Syria-Iraqi-Iran alliance formed in 2015 in the midst of Syrian Civil War and the emergence of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) that caused the territory disturbance and international conflict. The alliance formation was not happens instantly and the member states have to deal with diplomatic conversations with each other before the agreement to form alliance achieved.

The important chronological event that is Syrian Civil War that erupted in 2011 that triggered by sequence of events that happen in Middle East and Syria. The “Arab Spring” that embraces the core idea of democratization and human rights spread around Middle East including Syria. The impact of Arab Spring in Syria is demonstration and expression of protest toward the government. Pro-democracy protests erupted in the southern town of Deraa in March 2011 after some teens who painted revolutionary slogans on a college wall were arrested and tortured. After the demonstrators were fired by the security forces, several were killed, more took to the

streets. The turmoil caused demonstrations across the country demanding the resignation of President Assad. The use of force by the government to crush the dissent simply hardened the determination of the demonstrators. Hundreds of thousands took to the streets across the nation by July 2011 (BBC News, 2016).

Violence escalated and the nation fell into civil war as rebel brigades were created to fight for control of cities, towns and landscape by state forces. In 2012, Fighting entered the capital Damascus and Aleppo's second city. The UN said 90,000 people were killed in the conflict by June 2013. According to activists and the UN, this figure had risen to 250,000 by August 2015. The war is now more than just a struggle for or against Bashar Assad. It has gained sectarian overtones, pitching the Sunni majority of the country against the Shia Alawite sect of the president, and drawing in regional and global forces. The emergence of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) jihadist group added another dimension (BBC News, 2016).

The next chronological event that occur that lead to the initiation of alliance is the impact of ISIS toward Syrian-Iraqi territory that make it unstable in term of security that later affect other sectors. ISIS announced itself as new nation that adopt the caliphate system. In 2014 it launch attack on Mosul and Tirkat and ISIS leader Abu Bakr al Baghdadi announced the formation of the caliphate state across Aleppo in Syria to Diyala in Iraq, and proclaim it as Islamic State (Wilson Center, 2019).

In the time when Syria caught with internal conflict Syria already conduct the diplomatic conversation with Russia and the conversation

centered in the theme of security. Since October 2011, Russia has repeatedly vetoed in the UN Security Council, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, Western-sponsored draft resolutions calling for the resignation of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and opening up the possibility of the United Nations sanctions against his administration (Borger & Inzaurrealde, 2015). The Russian leadership denies the requirements of Western powers and their Arab allies not to allow Bashar Assad to participate in the settlement in Syria. The Russian leadership denies the requirements of Western powers and their Arab allies not to allow Bashar Assad to participate in the settlement in Syria (Harding, Smith, & Khomami, 2015). In the mean time the conflict that occurs in Syria attracts not only groups from inside the state but also neighboring states to also involve.

Iran and Syria is considerably near in term of geographical proximity and the bilateral relation between them are good so in the time of conflict and when Syrian Bashar Assad conduct the conversation with Iran about possible assistance in arms and security Iran shows the good cooperation toward Syrian requests. Iran is strengthening its assistance for President Bashar al-Assad, sending top military consultants to Damascus to collect intelligence and train Syrian troops. Several hundred army experts have been deployed to Syria in latest months, including senior Quds Force commanders, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) elite foreign operations unit (Sherlock, 2014).

The relations of Syrian with Iran also open the door for the relation of Russia with Iran in the context of this security conflict. Major General Qassem Soleimani visit Moscow in July 2015 with the direct commando from Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah

Ali Khamenei. Soleimani described the declining scenario in Syria in his Moscow conference, where rebel advances to the shore posed a threat to the heartland of Assad's Alawite sect, where Russia retains its only Mediterranean naval base in Tartous. Three senior authorities in the region claim that the July journey of Soleimani was preceded by high-level contacts between Russia and Iran that generated political agreement on the need to pump fresh assistance to Assad as his losses accelerated (Bassam & Perry, 2015).

When the Syrian conflict became Civil War and escalated it triggered the emergences of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in 2014 when they spread the terror with arms and violence in Syrian-Iraqi territory and declare their so called Islamic State territory in this area makes the conflict become more wide spread and Iraq become involved in the conflict. Iran has deployed an elite unit of its Revolutionary Guard in a wonderful growth that threatens to further destabilize the Middle East to assist the Iraqi government take on ISIS, the Sunni militant group that has seized several regions in the southern portion of the nation. Two Quds Forces battalions are already making strides in their struggle against Iraq and Syria's Islamic State, or ISIS. The militant group took control of Tikrit's hometown of Saddam Hussein, but on Thursday, Iraqi and Iranian security forces, the Revolutionary Guard and Iraqi troops surpassed 85% of the city (Koplowitz, 2014).

A guard unit already in Iraq fought alongside the Iraqi army, providing guidance and tactics on guerrilla warfare that helped regain most of Tikrit's town. Two Guard units deployed from the western border regions of Iran were tasked with defending Baghdad and Karbala and Najaf's holy Shiite towns.

The commander of the Quds Forces and one of the most strong army figures in the region, General Qasem Sulaimani, traveled to Baghdad to assist manage the swelling crisis, a member of the Revolutionary Guards or IRGC said (Koplowitz, 2014).

The Iraqi military has formally announced that it will start sharing "safety and intelligence" data with Russia, Syria, and Iran in order to help fight the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) developments. A declaration issued by the Iraqi Joint Operations Command stated that the nations would "assist and collaborate in gathering terrorist ISIS data." It is a committee that coordinates with representatives of each country in the field of military intelligence and aims at sharing and analyzing information," Saad al-Hadithi, a spokesman for the office of Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, told the news agency of the AFP (Khan, 2015).

Al-Jazeera announces that the sharing intelligence will comprise Russia, Syria, Iran, and Iran. Iraqi sources said that the center was stationed by two Russian one-star commanders. Zamili, a major Shia Muslim politician, said that each of the four member nations has six participants in the cell for intelligence sharing and safety collaboration, which holds meetings in the fortified "Green Zone" in Baghdad, once home to the US occupation office (Al-Jazeera, 2015).

Brigadier General Amir Hatami, Minister of Defense for Iran, said Iran attaches excellent significance to attempts to combat terrorism. The chief of defense said Tehran, Moscow, Baghdad, and Damascus emerged as the powerful force against ISIS that had occupied big parts of Iraq and Syria. He explains the coalition formed by Iran, Iraq, Syria, and

Russia that played a serious and effective role in defeating ISIS based on the determination of the top officials of the four countries. Common knowledge of threats and interests and the joint intelligence collaboration between the four nations in the fight against terrorism has been a good experience in restoring stability and safety, and this should form the foundation for future collaboration. Some nations that say they want to assist create peace in the Middle East "have become the most criminal governments against Iraq, Syria and Yemen's oppressed people." (Tehran Times, 2018).

B. Alliance's Point of Agreement

As the Alliance of Russia-Syria-Iraq-Iran emerges they also create the points of agreement of their alliance. With the mutual understanding of their agreement they can hold their alliance and draw a constructive goals and tasks. The alliance focuses is security issue of Syria-Iraqi territory so they build the agreement in the context that surrounding security issue in the territory.

The alliance will agree on gather, process, and analyze all current information about the situation in the Middle East. With this process in mind the alliance can coordinate operation against ISIS with control of information about battleground. The specific agreements of the alliance are:

1. Monitoring the Middle East political-military scenario. It's essential because not only have the parties (Russia, Syria, Iran, Iraq) data, but they have to interpret it likewise. In other cases, it will be sterile to successfully coordinate (Tehran Times, 2018).

2. Plan and coordinate direct military activities in the battle space between Syria and Iraq. It's one of the center's primary tasks. It implies the appearance of the "alternative" anti-ISIS coalition joint command and control. Yes, it's not a headquarters together. But in any case, it's very important because it clarifies the Middle East powers ' balance. The US has complex relations with its primary allies at the time: Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Israel. The US allies prefer to pursue their interests rather than the US-led anti-ISIS coalition's official purpose (Tehran Times, 2018).
3. Liaison with the State officials involved in the Joint Information Center. This simplifies logistics and humanitarian attempts, enabling a common approach to be developed on key political problems (Tehran Times, 2018).