

TURKEY-SAUDI ARABIA TENSION DURING THE CASE OF JAMAL KHASHOGGI MURDER

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Abstract

This article is aimed to explain about the Tension between Turkey and Saudi Arabia relation during the case of Jamal Khashoggi murder incident. Interpreting the bilateral relation between these two countries is quite complicated since both countries relation are highly depended on the situation that happens surround the Middle East region. When it comes to the murder of Jamal Khashoggi is really controversial since the existence of Jamal Khashoggi personally related to the three countries which are Saudi Arabia, Turkey and United States. Furthermore, this incident is classified as one of a tragic murder that ever hit a Journalist. That is why as a host country where this murder incident took place, Turkey not only think that they are actually have a responsibility in handling this case, but also Turkey seems to be more utilizing this case to gain more benefit especially in the term of power interests. Therefore, this article also aimed to analyze Turkey's interest behind its intervention towards this case. In order to understand about Turkey's action towards this case, the author put forward the theory of Foreign Policy according to Jack C. Plano and Roy Olton then explained the interest that Turkey played by use a concept of National Interest according to Morgenthau. The data analyzed in this research was the secondary data using library research method. As the result, this research signified that Turkey's national interest in this case is based on the Power Interest that aims for two aspects which are 1) to maintain the stability of the Turkish region's security; and 2) To strengthen Turkey's strategic position to have a big influence in the middle east as well as to get a media darling from the International Society that concern about the Journalist.

Keyword(s) : Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Jamal Khashoggi's murder, Bilateral Relation, Foreign Policy, National Interest

A. BACKGROUND

The Republic of Turkey and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have established the diplomatic relation in 1932 after the establishment of the new Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018) In the same year, Saudi Arabia started to relished full international recognition as an independent state. These two countries have not revealed abundant of interest significantly since in that era the Turkey's secular rulling elite was more attracted to have economic and strategic cooperation with the West rather than to the Arab World and then Turkey decided to join the NATO in 1951 two years after the NATO formation. (The Conversation, 2018)

Since Turkey and Saudi Arabia have differences in foreign

policy, ideology and political systems, there's no any further effort for developing the bilateral reltions between both until the mid of 1960s but when it comes to 1970s, the relation between Turkey and Saudi Arabia relation began to develop because of number of incidents that happened during that era. Turkey started to addopt a different orientation on its foreign policy with broad internasional support to its Cyprus cause in the early 1960s and 1970s. It leads to the reapproachment with Muslim Countries where Turkey's decided to join with the new born islamic organization named *Organization Islamic Cooperation* in 1969 and established official relations with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1975. Meanwhile Saudi Arabia was very positively in responding this

developments and didn't oppose Turkey's military intervention in Cyprus in 1974. Other than that, Saudi Arabia was one of the main destinations sought by the Turkish migrants in the 1970s and 1980s who worked in Saudi's infrastructure projects. In the 1980s upon the adaptation of the economic liberalization program by Turgut Ozal's administration in Turkey, Saudi Islamic banks started to flourish in the Turkish economy and also there were many Islamic NGOs were established in Turkey and Saudi Arabia that developed economic ties with the pro-Islamic Turkish businessmen and politicians (usually known in Turkey by the followers of Milli Gorus). The changes in Turkish foreign policy proceeded by the domestic changes and rise of Islamic based political figures in the mid 1980s that encouraged Saudi

Arabia to invest in the Turkish market. In 1985, there were three big Saudi Islamic financial institutions like : Albaraka Turk Ozel Finans, Faisal Finans and Family Finans that opened in Turkey. (Koni, 2012)

In 1991 when there was a Persian Gulf war, Turkey and Saudi Arabia were on the same side of the international coalition led by the United States that against Saddam Hussein in Iraq. During this war, Saudi Arabia was giving help to Turkey financially through loans so that it can overcome the bad aftermaths of the war on Turkish economy. Nevertheless, the relation between these two countries are getting tense at the end of 1990s as a result of the weakening of Turkish-Syirian relations over Syiria's support to the Kurdistan Worker Party (PKK) and the problems on the usage of the

Euphrates river, where Saudi Arabia lobbied against Turkey's request for a loan from the World Bank to finance building dams on the Euphrates river that goes from Turkey to Syria. (Altunisik, 2012) Since then Turkey relations with Saudi Arabia encounter the ups and downs phase until today since facing the issues that happened surround them.

Since the establishment of these two countries bilateral relation, their relations are actually highly dependent on the regional conditions in Middle East and the ways about how each country approach and responds toward the situation. Therefore, the dynamics of Turkey and Saudi Arabia relation will be elaborated based on the the most influence situations as follows:

1. The weakening of Turkey-Syria relation in 1991

After a long good relation that have been developed since 1932 until 1990, Turkey and Saudi Arabia started to face the dynamics on both countries relation. It was started in 1991, Turkey and Syria's relation getting worse because the Syria support the Kurdistan Worker Party when they have conflict with Turkey. The conflict known as The Kurdish-Turkish conflict. It was an armed conflict between the Republic of Turkey and several Kurdish insurgent groups which have demanded separatism from Turkey to create an independent autonomy or greater political and cultural rights for Kurds inside the Republic of Turkey in which the main rebel group is the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). (Altunisik, 2012)

2. The rise of Justice and Development Party (AKP) under president Erdogan administration in 2000.

In 2000 the Justice and Development Party (AKP) was obtain power in Turkey, scholarly publications dealing with its political and ideological orientation have generally focused on the party's relationship with Islamism. (Demirkol, 2015) It gave a big influence to the relation between Turkey and Saudi Arabia where these two countries found a tight footing relation. Under the administration of Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan together with the AKP party, they placed a high priority on constructing the stronger relationships with its Arab and Muslim neighbors.

3. The U.S. invansion to Iraq in 2003
In the case of the US invansion of Iraq in 2003 and several changes in the balance of power that happened

on that region was resulting the relationship of Turkey and Saudi Arabia getting closer since both of them feeling concerned about Iraq that fall into the hands of their common rival, Iran whose military and political influence increased as a result of the invasion. They also wanted to contain Iran's influence in Syiria and Lebanon. (CNN-INTERNATIONAL.COM, 2003)

4. The Arab Spring Wave 2011

In responding this huge demonstrations protest, here Turkey and Arab Saudi started to show their inequality in seeing the issue. Turkish responses were varied according to particular interests in the fate of each regime. However, as the inevitability of the Arab Spring appeared to take hold, the Ankara government's responses became increasingly coherent and stimulated around a principled approach in favour of the change

sought by Arab Spring protestors.

Saudi Arabia, in contrast, viewed the start of the revolutions with a mixture of concern and scepticism.

(Momani, 2013)

5. Qatar Crisis 2017

In responding to this issue, Saudi Arabia and Turkey again have an opposite point of view. In one side Saudi Arabia along with its regional allies and detached all of their relations with Qatar and decided to enforce economic blockade as the last support for Muslim, Turkey on the other hand, try to expand its engagement with Qatar, offering economic aid and sending troops to its small military base in Qatar. Moreover, the Turkish shipments to Qatar played a critical role in the ability to endure the economic blockade. (BBC NEWS, 2017)

6. Jamal Khashoggi Murder in 2018

In 2018, the International world was shocked by the murder of a journalist from the United States but has Saudi Arabia citizenship, named Jamal Khashoggi. He was killed in Saudi Arabia consulate in Turkey when he wants to arrange marriage documents with his Turkish national fiancée named Hatice Cengiz. By facing this incident, Turkey and Saudi Arabia is really have an opposite action that cause these two countries relation getting worse.

B. ANALYSIS

In analyzing the case of Jamal Khashoggi Murder incident it was started when Turkey's pressure to Saudi Arabia that bring more big influence towards their relation, even it also impact to the internal situation of Turkey. Moreover, because of Turkish deep intervention towards this case, a

boycott towards Turkish product is being announced by Saudi Arabia that could threaten Turkish economic. However, it doesn't make Turkey stop its commitment to resolve this case for the sake of justice.

It's become a big question, the reasons behind the murder of Jamal Khashoggi and why his murder becoming very controversial. The existence of Khashoggi himself closely related to the three countries which are Saudi Arabia, United States and Turkey because Khashoggi is known to have Turkish blood from his grandfather and his family is one of thousands of Saudi citizens of Turkish descent. Khashoggi was known as a critical reporter who was very brave to deliver the sharp criticisms to the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia. In an interview on the UpFront Aljazeera program and a number of columns published in the

Washington Post, Khashoggi expressed his support for the reforms launched by the Saudi crown prince. It shows how important he is in a media role as a critical reporter that often gives his strict criticisms towards the Islamic issues that happen around the Islamic countries but especially to Saudi Arabia. Khashoggi has great confidence towards his country. All the criticisms that he expressed, it's because he hopes his country could be a much better Islamic country although Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman ever devised a plan to persuade Khashoggi who lives in the US to return to Saudi Arabia and detain him, but it didn't make him go back to Saudi Arabia. He continued his life as a reporter then found a woman in Turkey. Unfortunately, no one knows that when he wants to arrange his marriage documents in Saudi

Arabia Consulate in Turkey would bring him into a death.

I. TURKISH POLICY TOWARDS THE TRAGIC OF JAMAL KHASOGGI MURDER.

As the Jamal Khashoggi murder incident happened in Turkey, of course Turkey as the host country cannot remain silent in facing this case. When Turkey knew there had been a murder at the consulate general of Saudi Arabia in Turkey, Turkish Government directly took immediate action. The government did such kind of deep investigation regarding this case. Turkish investigators believe that he was strangled when he visited to collect documents on his marriage to a Turkish citizen which would soon be held.

As the result of the investigation on October 17th , it was reported by the anonymous

source of Turkey found an audio recordings that shows how Jamal Khashoggi mutilated for 7 minutes. One day after, Middle East Eye quoted a source from within the Saudi kingdom and reported that 7 of the 15 members of the killing team were close people and bodyguards of Mohammed bin Salman. Saudi Arabia admitted sending 15 people to bring Jamal to go home. They did such negotiations with Khashoggi but then it was failed. After a long investigation done by Turkey until they found the suspect of this murder, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has demanded extradition of suspects and a court in Turkey issued an arrest warrant for former Saudi intelligence chief Ahmad al-Assiri and former adviser to the royal family Saud al-Qahtani, on December 5th 2018, but then the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia,

Mr. Adel al-Jubeir refused an extradition request for the defendants to murder the journalist Jamal Khashoggi who was posted by Turkey. He also asked their friends in Turkey to share with them about the evidence that can be used in court but unfortunately this was reportedly rejected by Ankara. But then after a long negotiations Ankara is finally agree to have a further investigation with together with Saudi Arabia. (BBC NEWS, 2018)

Furthermore, as the action of responsibility towards this case, the Saudi foreign minister stressed the suspects would not be extradited to Turkey, but would be prosecuted in Saudi Arabia. It took more than 2 weeks for Saudi Arabia to find out that Jamal Khashoggi was killed at their embassy in Istanbul on October 2.

II. TURKISH POWER INTEREST TOWARDS SAUDI ARABIA IN THE CASE OF JAMAL KHASHOGGI MURDER.

As mentioned before that, in handling this case besides Turkey feel have responsibility in resolving this case, Turkey also seems to be more utilizing this case especially in term of Maintaining Turket self-defense and gaining more influence in Middle East.

a) Maintaining Turkish self-defense

The case of Jamal Khashoggi's murder not only caused a rift in Turkish and Saudi Arabia relations, but indirectly it affected the internal security situation of Turkey itself. After experienced a long emergency conditions that occur due to the threat of a coup in turkey against president Erdogan, in 2018 Turkey finally revoked the status of an internal security emergency

condition which was imposed for 2 years since 2016. Turkey managed to get out of the status of dangerous zones by immediately taking very strict steps in dealing with the situation included the arrest of 80 thousand people and the dismissal of military officials, state employees, including teachers because they were suspected of being involved in a July 2016 coup. (Tempo.co, 2018) Start from that hard situation, the Turkish internal security conditions is getting stabil. But then when the emerged of Khashoggi's murder in Turkey, the security stability in Turkey was called into question.

The rift between Saudi Arabia and Turkey over the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi is believed to have an impact on the economic sector. The tension over the Khashoggi killings has led nationalists to pro-government media to call for a

boycott of Turkey whose slow economy. Turkey's economy experienced a sharp contraction of 3% in the fourth quarter of 2018. The economic condition was the worst in almost a decade and became a signal that the country's currency crisis could lead it into recession. To take on this situation, President Erdogan immediately took steps to resolve this case by do such a deep investigation to find the suspect in this murder, so that it can prove that this incident was not affected by the internal situation of Turkey itself.

b) Gaining more influence in the Middle East

The long-standing rivalry between Turkey and Saudi Arabia was influenced by a various tragedy that happened in the Middle East. The conflict between Turkey and Saudi Arabia is about more than just geopolitics, it also influenced by the

ideological and survival. However, The Khashoggi affair allowed Erdoğan to present Turkey in a positive light. It could be said that here Turkey was successfully maximalize this case by the how Turkey show its responsibility towards the case. A number of observers have noted the masterful way in which Ankara has stage-managed the release of information surrounding the Khashoggi case. Deconstructing these arguments discloses to us a lot about Turkey's interests for the situation. Rarely in the past several years has the embattled Turkish President had the option to wear a robe of uprightness in driving Western media. Now on, given the intense media enthusiasm for the Khashoggi issue, the Turkish President sees an opportunity to show his nation in a positive light. Since as we know many analysis of

the situation has noted, Turkey is the world's driving jailer of journalists, and the country has dropped to 157th place of 180 countries on the World Press Freedom Index (still, it ought to be noted, 12 spots higher than Saudi Arabia. Therefore, Turkey really put a high maximum interest towards this case to show its concern towards journalist also to bring Turkey into a light position especially in the Middle East Region. Other than that Khashoggi's case brought political advantages for Turkey because the popularity of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan increased internationally.

C. CONCLUSION

The case of Jamal Khashoggi murder, bring the relation between Turkey and Saudi Arabia getting worse. The deep intervention that Turkey held to find

out the evidences of the murder that is resulting such accusations towards Saudi Arabia as a part who is being involved in this murder incident and stressing out that the prince Mohammad bin Salman as a man that ordered this murder. But then it got rejected by Saudi Arabia, they preferred to do their own investigation. Moreover, Saudi Arabia sees Turkey's deep investigation and the effectiveness of the time-released of all the evidences that they had, could become the actions that would bring a bad impact towards Saudi Arabia's name in the eye of the world especially in the middle East Region. Therefore, it has led nationalists to pro-government of Saudi Arabia media to call for a boycott of Turkish products and sounding out to not going to Turkey because the situation there is not safe after the murder incident.

Because of this action, it gives an impact towards Turkish Tourism sector that becoming decreases and indirectly impacted towards the Turkish economy that still low until today. This situation make the conflict between Turkey and Saudi Arabia is deeper and more complicated than it is made out to be. As the host country, Turkey not only think that they are actually have a responsibility in handling this case, but also Turkey seems to be more utilizing this case to gain more benefit especially in the term of power interests. Firstly, as a form of self-defense that Turkey must keep after the murder incident that impact towards the Turkey internal security specifically in the tourism sector that would impacted to the economy. Secondly, by having a deep concern towards this case, Turkey sees a chance to present Turkey in a positive light in gaining

a broader influence in the Middle East region and weakening the Saudi Arabia name in the eye's of the world. It can't be denied Saudi Arabia as a suspected country of the Jamal Khashoggi murder got the disadvantages as the impacts. Those are such as the case of Khashoggi's death was a step backwards for the efforts to modernize the Saudi Vision 2030 (Saudi Vision 2030) spearheaded by Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Other than that, The Share stock of Saudi Arabia is decreased sharply, the founder and leader of the Virgin Hyperloop One Group threatened to withdraw its 1 million pound sterling railroad deal with Saudi Arabia, and also Saudi Arabia Threatened to fail in becoming the host country of G20 summit on November 2020. With all the evidences that has been found and the bad impacts that Saudi Arabia got from the Jamal

Khashoggi murder, it could be said that Turkey successfully cornering the Saudi Arabia position in the Middle East region even in the eye's of the world.

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