

CHAPTER II

THE UNITED STATES AND INDONESIA BILATERAL RELATION AND INDONESIAN CITIZENS PERCEPTION TOWARD THE UNITED STATES

International Relations is basically a sign of the association between performing actors, including everything correlated with the communication in a worldwide framework. Communication will show up if there is a relationship between the two countries having similar purposes. Likewise, with each nation on the planet, the communication happens between one nation to another and in order to accomplish the purposes and targets, every nation keeps depending each other to reach the goal to keep up the viability of the nation (Kusumohamidjojo, 1987).

Each country needs each other to be able to meet the needs and goals of the country, especially in the modern era and in the world which is increasingly complex. Due to the increasing complexity of international relations, every country can not be free to be mutual dependence with other countries. In this case, the state has role to maintain the engagement, then the international relations that took place can be seen from the number of his country, starting from the level of relationship that simplest of all bilateral relations concerning the two countries and the level of multilateral relations related to more than two countries. International relation is also known by the term global relations. In the sense that the political aspects and facets of the process of global relations. Political aspects could be interpreted as an aspect of the material and therefore can be realized in the form of military interest, economy,

culture and so on. In foreign policy decision making process, legal aspects into formal aspect which is a form of procedural completion of the various interests that ultimately can and should be concluded in political interests.

International relations is often interpreted as a global relationship which includes all the relationships that happen by going beyond national borders. Bilateral relations can occur due to such geographical location, resources, natural resources, population and labor, political, economic, military and security. Based on the interpretation of Didi Krisna, bilateral relationship is states that describe a relationship of mutual influence or a mutual relationship between the two parties or two countries (Krisna, 1993).

The United States politics in international relations is well known by the public. The United States has a well-established economy and advanced technology and requires a good start in implementing the inter-state relations. The end of the Cold War was won by the United States, making The United States increasingly spread its wings in the international arena. The United States is an independent country and a country that can attract other countries to create cooperation relations, especially for developing countries that have not enough capability or capacity to have an influence in international relations (Wirajuda, 2004). One of the countries chosen by The United States is Indonesia, as it considers Indonesia as an important country that might be able to corporate together to fulfill its national needs.

A. The United States and Indonesia bilateral relations

The relationship between Indonesia and The United States had started before the Proclamation of Independence of Indonesia in 1945. Then, on December 28, 1949, The United States opened The United States Embassy in Jakarta and appointed first The United States ambassador to Indonesia, Horace Merle Cochran. On February 20, 1950, the Indonesian government appointed Dr. Sastroamidjojo as the first Indonesian Ambassador to the United States. Both countries have a strong foundation in cooperation for the benefit of both parties, which is based on democratic values respected joint or shared values, namely democracy, good governance, respect for human rights and a pluralistic and tolerant society. Based on these premises, Indonesia expects to achieve a broader relationship with The United States government in various fields in accordance to the needs and development of both parties.

Indonesia and the United States held various forms of cooperation, which cooperation was initiated through the cooperation in the security field by holding a joint regular dialogue on 19 September 2001 by President George W. Bush and President Megawati Soekarnoputri in Washington DC. Dialog security provides a place for government officials from the departments of each country with regard to security issues and defense regularly and exchanged views on the issue of regional security situation, national security policy, piracy, military reform, the policy areas of

counter-terrorism, and the budget process. As a result, both countries can improve their mutual understanding, perceptions, and policies on strategic issues and security.

The next dialogue was held on April 25, 2002, in Jakarta which was agreed between Indonesia and The United States. Each representative or delegations of the two countries agreed that this dialogue is the key to building trust to strengthen regional peace and stability. Each country showed their representation, besides Indonesia and the United States, shared the view that there was still a long regional conflict that needed to be managed and resolved peacefully. At the end of the dialogue, the two delegations stated that the Dialogue was an important pillar in the relationship between Indonesia and the United States and appreciate the spirit of open and constructive shown by all participants in the dialogue. Both countries then agreed to continue at the beginning 2003 (Institute, 2011). The next Dialogue was held on April 23 in Washington DC, continued from the first meeting, at the Dialogue discussed or reviewing the international security situation and the Asia-Pacific region at that time. Moreover, this dialogue also discussed their respective efforts to eliminate terrorism and agreed on the need to promote and protect human rights. The US government appreciated the efforts of the Indonesian government to reform the Indonesian National Army or *TNI* and its statement that would maintain the professionalism and commitment to remain neutral in elections taking place at the time. The United States delegation also gave exposure to some strategic aspects of their national security as well as changes in the form of The United States global

defense, while Indonesia explained the national security and regional counterterrorism issues. The agreement also stated that Indonesian delegation requested clarification of The United States policy toward the sea line, and The United States delegation would also provide a guarantee to respect Indonesia's sovereignty over its territory and clarified the concept of Regional Maritime Security Initiative or MRSI. More, it also agreed to continue to consult with Indonesia.

The cooperation between The United States and Indonesia became more advance during Barrack Obama administration. The United States and Indonesia relations have gone up against expanding significance. Indonesia is the world's third largest democracy, has the biggest Muslim-larger part populace, is the tenth biggest economy in the world by acquiring power, and has the world's most noteworthy marine biodiversity and its second most noteworthy physical biodiversity. Those characteristics triggering The United States to have certain interest towards Indonesia until both bilateral relationships produce Comprehensive Partnership, introduced in 2010 when President Obama set out to Indonesia, cultivated predictable abnormal state engagement on vote based system and common society, training, security, atmosphere, sea, vitality, and exchange issues, among others. In view of its prosperity, in 2015 the two nations overhauled the relationship to the United States and Indonesia Strategic Partnership, stretching out participation to issues of local and worldwide (AFFAIRS, 2016).

B. The United States problem in maintaining bilateral relations with Indonesia

In international relations, state as political actor creates cooperation with a lot challenges. It always runs dynamically. There is a moment when cooperation between states gets stronger or the opposite when states are unable to deal with certain cases and it turn into a conflict. It is also happening with The United States and Indonesia bilateral relations, Indonesia which known as divers nation having bunch type of society. The differences conduct in several aspects, such as race, religion and others. As moslem majority state, which also applies democratic system, it is a big challenge to maintain the country. It is also triggers the people to speak up throughout community group, social movement, political party and others.

Those community groups which shaped in several forms, such as movement and others playing role as supporting partner for state cooperation. But also, in the other way, it could be a challenge or problem when they are not be able to deal with certain policy and cases. The United States faces problems in maintaining its relationship with Indonesia when it concerns on public or social view, since there are a lot of people having negative perception toward The United State itself. In fact, those people who oppose The United States become stronger caused they are united in a movement, especially those which could be categorized as a left wing named PKS (*Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* - Prosperous Justice Party), HTI (*Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia* – Indonesian *Hizb Ut Tahrir*), and FPI (*Front Pembela Islam* – The Islamic Defenders Front) and also right wing which conduct communist movements. Those

community groups having negative perception toward The United States articulate their opposition through several term such as publishing soft protest through online and offline media, held public protest to the Embassy and Consulate General or even forcing Indonesian government to avoid certain cooperation with The United States.

The writer classifies how perceived negative perception of Indonesian society is given to the United States through several two ways: direct and indirect. Direct approach, which means action of these perceptions voiced in tangible form. Usually this is done at the Embassy or Consulate General by instrument is a mass with considerable amount, and done because of the insistence of certain insistence. The second is indirect means to use various tools such as media, both online and offline to publish negative thought provoking them against the United States with the hope for change with the things they have done and done individually or in groups via a press release or official website.

1. Direct Approach

There are several cases happen regarding negative perception of Indonesian people toward The United States comes up through direct protest, such as protest doing by around 200 people which mostly coming from HTI right in front of The United States Embassy, Jakarta in December 30, 2008. They are protesting The United States regarding behavior in facing Islamic attack in Middle East, people assume that The United States which known as

the country which having big influence just act like nothing happen and doing nothing regarding the attack (Widjaya & Astuti, 2008).

The other case is what HTI member did in The United States Consulate General, Surabaya in August 10, 2008. HTI activist shout out in front of Consulate General protesting The United States to not doing any kind of intervention toward Indonesia domestic problem, the website of HTI cite that:

“The activists of HTI started rallies Around 09.00 am. By carrying posters and banners condemning the United States Government to interfere regarding the liberation without requirement of separatist movement separatist leaders named OPM (*Organisasi Papua Merdeka* - Free Papua Organization) Filep Karma and Yusak Pakage. Mass coordinator, Fikri A Zudian, stated that the United States intervention was indicated when 40 members of The United States Congress recently lifted a letter addressed to the President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) and ask for a liberation of OPM leaders without requirement.” (Hidayat, 2008).

It is also happened in April 2012 when Indonesian people protesting in The United States Consulate General, Surabaya insist The United States to stop its attack toward Afghanistan regarding 9/11 tragedy. “This action escalate an anti-United States mindset among people in Indonesia” Cited from ABC (Radio, 2012).

2. Indirect Approach

There are also several people show up indirectly and commonly they are using media, whether online or offline. There are several website post a writing regarding an anti-United States movement such as in HTI official website which described in a writing titled “The United States: Lies, Colonialization in the name of peace” (Syarifudin, 2014), the writing mentioning that “The essential battle is against capitalism civilization which led by The United States”. Others form of indirect perception toward The United States are personal writing which posted in public area such as website, flyer and poster. It all purposed in order to influence people to have same perception to against The United States.

C. The Appearance of Anti-Americanism in Indonesia

Those negative perceptions escalate and increase rapidly after The United States respond toward terrorist issues and it was resulting attack toward Islamic countries like Iraq. In few months after the issues, it was triggering Anti-Americanism in Indonesia to appear. Radical Islamic forces in Indonesia have become strong enough to withstand the loss of official tolerance and periodic patronage. Other hard-line Muslim groups include *Hizbut al-Tahrir*, *Laskar Jihad* and the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (MMI), and they are becoming more visible, assertive, and vocal in voicing their displeasure against the The United States.

There is also another critics that claim that The United States efforts were motivated by a desire to win Muslim friends and influence people. It is also stated by Habib Rizieq Shihab as the head of FPI (hardline Islamist group - *Front Pembela Islam*) that foreign troops corrupt strict Islamic culture.