



# Australia Foreign Policy Effect On Indonesia Post Independence of Timor Leste

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## **Abstract:**

*As initially, Australia supported the integration of Timor Leste into the Republic of Indonesia, many events occurred which caused the relationship between Indonesia and Australia to be slightly disturbed. The changes that have taken place in Australia's relationship with Indonesia illustrate the real effects of Timor-Leste's independence. As a result of Australia's role in the East Timorese independence process, its relationship underwent many changes, especially in the political and military fields. The changes taking place in military relations are evident. First, the Agreement on Mutual Security (AMS) was released. Second, the joint training was cancelled, and the troops that used to work together became enemies. Eventually, Australian arms sales to Indonesia were stopped. Changes in the political and diplomatic sphere, including all political visits, were cancelled, and politicians within Australia and Indonesia publicly denounced others. Furthermore, cooperation within the global framework is limited, and the Ambassador's 'high alert' status is. Overall, Australia's relations with Indonesia became hostile. This study aims to determine how the influence of Australian foreign policy on Indonesia after the independence of Timor Leste. This research shows that the independence of Timor Leste and Australia's role in this process directly influenced government relations between Australia and Indonesia. Most Indonesians view the Australian government's actions and policies as separate from its relationship with Australian citizens. However, the relationship between people must still be considered when making policies about Indonesia because of widespread reactions to Australia's role in the East Timorese independence process.*

## **Keywords:**

*Indonesia; Australia; Timor Leste; independence; foreign policy; change*

## **I. Introduction**

Australia-Indonesia relations have been marked by many ups and downs, especially after Timor Leste's independence announcement. However, new events can improve relations and cause the Australian government to change Southeast Asia and its attitude towards Southeast Asian countries, particularly Indonesia. Efforts to restructure Australia's relations with Indonesia are certainly still motivated by the independence of Timor Leste. Events, such as those in Timor Leste, have lasting effects as they change government policy and public perceptions.

Timor Leste has always been a problem for Indonesia, especially since Indonesia incorporated Timor Leste as the 27th province of the Republic of Indonesia in 1976. Timor Leste had always caused tensions between Australia and Indonesia for the past fifty years, long before Timor Leste joined Indonesia. There have been many incidents that highlight differences of opinion between Australia and Indonesia regarding the issue of Timor Leste. For example, the integration of Timor Leste into the Republic of Indonesia, the deaths of five (5) Australian journalists who were deemed unnatural, the Dunn Report, the article in the Sydney Morning Herald (written by Peter Jenkins), and finally, the Dili Incident. Nevertheless,

the most severe event that almost destroyed Australia's relations with Indonesia was the declaration of independence of Timor-Leste in 1999. Interim President B.J. Habibie had a significant influence on the East Timor independence process.

President Habibie made an unexpected move for the whole world in 1999 when he offered the East Timorese the opportunity for full autonomy (D, K, Emmerson, 2001). Under Habibie's proposal, the government in Jakarta was responsible only for foreign policy, guarding the enemy against invasion by foreign countries and financial problems. Many Indonesian experts believe that President Habibie's response to international pressure was this announcement. To a certain degree, the experts were right. As a result of the Monetary Crisis, the Indonesian government still relies on Western countries and Japan to reconstruct the Indonesian economy. Therefore, Indonesia was forced to compromise on other issues, including its stance on East Timor (G, Forrester. 2002).

Habibie's proposal is a broad autonomy in which Jakarta is responsible for only three (3) areas; foreign relations affairs, defence against the outside, and monetary and fiscal policy aspects. In August, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, and the Indonesian and Portuguese Foreign Ministers, met for in-depth discussions on the future of East Timor. However, the two sides still have disagreements. Indonesia considers the implementation of broad autonomy in East Timor as the final solution to the problem. At the same time, Portugal sees broad autonomy as the first step in East Timor's independence process (United Nations and East Timor, 2002). The Habibie Agreement, which was sudden, disturbed many leaders of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) because, in their opinion, if East Timor could be separated from Indonesia, it would be detrimental to the unity of the Republic of Indonesia.

Nevertheless, the Habibie government recommended that the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) cancel the 1976 law that integrated East Timor with Indonesia. The Habibie Agreement encouraged many opponents in both Indonesia and East Timor. Many Indonesians share the same opinion as the TNI leader, namely, that the unity of the Republic of Indonesia is threatened if East Timor becomes independent. Moreover, East Timorese believes that East Timor's future depends on Indonesia (United Nations and East Timor, 2002).

Despite this opposition, the process of resolving the East Timor issue continues. Early in 1999, many meetings took place in New York. The meeting took place from February 7, 1999, to February 8 and was attended by Portuguese Foreign Minister Jaime Gama and Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas. However, they could not agree on whether the autonomy offered was a final solution or a temporary measure. Then, there was another meeting from March 10 to March 11 in New York, where it was decided that all East Timorese (who are still living in East Timor and who are already outside East Timor). The opportunity to vote to accept or reject the autonomy offered (United States of America). Nations and East Timor, 2002).

The situation in East Timor is becoming more hopeful in the future as the possibility of broad autonomy, or complete independence becomes more precise than before. However, incidents occur that soften the feeling of hope. For example, between April 6, 1999, and April 17, at least thirty-eight (38) people were killed. On April 6, pro-integration militias killed twenty-five (25) people attending a church ceremony in Liquica. Eleven (11) days later, more than thirteen (13) people, who had taken refuge in the house of pro-independence leader Manuel Carrascalao in Dili, were killed by pro-integration militias.

However, the last meeting in New York, between 21 and 23 April 1999, drafted an agreement on the future of East Timor. This agreement was signed on May 5, 1999 (see Appendix 2). There are two introductory chapters; Article 5 and Article 6. Article 5 states that if the proposal is accepted, 'the Indonesian side must initiate the necessary constitutional actions to implement the autonomy framework.' Moreover, Portugal should also initiate the process 'necessary to remove East Timor from the list of non-self-governing Territories from the UN General Assembly, thereby removing the East Timor question from the international agenda'.

Under the agreement, the Indonesian government accepted responsibility for the security of East Timor. However, when the results became clear - that the people of East Timor rejected special autonomy within the Republic of Indonesia - violence erupted again. There is credible evidence and reports that elements of the TNI are involved. All parties acknowledged that even if the TNI was not involved, they could not stop the violence.<sup>71</sup> Even though the Indonesian military could not stop the violence, the Indonesian government did not allow foreign troops, including UN troops, to enter East Timor to restore law and order.

After the violence in East Timor began, the world's reaction changed. At first, Western countries were reluctant to interfere in the situation in East Timor. Then the US government stopped all arms sales and military relations with Indonesia. There are signs that the US government is also willing to implement economic sanctions against Indonesia. Subsequently, after the vote, at least six (6) local UNAMET (United Nations Mission in East Timor) personnel were killed in the violence carried out. Because the security of UNAMET personnel, both local and international, cannot be guaranteed, Special Representative Ian Martin recommended evacuating all UNAMET staff to Darwin. Moreover, with the help of the Australian Defense Force (ADF), most of its staff were evacuated.

Finally, on September 12, President Habibie changed his mind and allowed international troops to end the situation in East Timor. Under the leadership of the United Nations, INTERFET (International Force in East Timor) was established to restore peace and stop violence. For INTERFET to have absolute power, the TNI had to withdraw to West Timor. Finally, INTERFET restored stability to Timor-Leste, and the independence process was carried out. In the May 5 Agreement, Indonesia and Portugal agreed on transferring power. First, UNTAET (United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor) assumes control of administration in East Timor. UNTAET established Security Council resolution 1272 on October 25, 1999, as the interim government legal system and system of government was formed. The second step began on May 30, 2000, when the government of Timor Leste was a joint venture between UNTAET and the people of Timor Leste. During this period, the people of Timor Leste were prepared to take complete control of the presidential elections and the elections for the National Consultative Assembly. Finally, Timor-Leste became a fully self-governing state on May 20, 2002.<sup>78</sup> This date marked the end of a period of suffering for the people of Timor-Leste.

Australia is difficulty getting a good rating in Indonesia and other Southeast Asian countries. For this reason, Australia's relationship with Indonesia is significant in bridging Australia's relations with other Southeast Asian countries, especially with ASEAN countries (Association of Southeast Asian Nations). Australia is different from other countries in the ASEAN region because Australia usually follows and supports the United States and Europe in many ways. As a result, most Southeast Asian countries are suspicious of Australia for its activities. When Australia took part in the declaration of East Timor's independence, other

Southeast Asian countries were concerned about Australia's intentions in its territory. In addition, Indonesia itself feels very anxious because there are still several regions that want to be independent or break away from the unitary territory of the Republic of Indonesia. Despite the new relationship improvement, Australia's past policies and actions should be considered as policies and harmonious relations are determined in the future. Most Australians are suspicious of Indonesia because they think Indonesians are too different from Australians. Therefore, they cannot or do not want to understand Indonesian culture and people.

Furthermore, relations with Indonesia are less favourable to Australia than Japan or the US. Nevertheless, relations with Indonesia are still significant for the survival of the two countries. Events such as Timor Leste's independence had lasting effects and should be considered when discussing and planning the relationship's future.

## **II. Review of Literature**

The annexation of mostly Catholic Portuguese Timor signed the beginning of a violent integration campaign. Many world organizations, such as Amnesty International, estimate that the security forces killed as many as Portuguese Timorese. This conclusion is confirmed by the Dunn Report (written by former Australian diplomat James Dunn), which says nearly 15 per cent of the population of Portuguese Timor were murdered. After Indonesia controlled the Portuguese Timor, the integration process would still undermine Indonesia's reputation in the world's eyes (Kitley .P. Chauvel. R. and Reeve .D., 1989).

The events that took place in Portuguese Timor would indeed attract the attention of other countries. The United Nations (UN) deplors Indonesia's invasion of East Timor and the integration process. Not even recognized by the UN, but it considers East Timor still a Portuguese colony. The UN General Assembly passed official resolutions condemning the Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia (ABRI) and the Indonesian government and the continued violence. Portugal did not give an apparent reality. Portugal's only reality about how to respond to the merger of Portuguese Timor with Indonesia. The Portuguese's first answer was to sever diplomatic relations with Indonesia. However, during the late seventies and early eighties, the Portuguese government continued its strong stand against its invasion. However, before the late eighties, the Portuguese government had clarified its stance on East Timor and increased pressure on the United Nations and Indonesia to allow self-determination (Schwarz p., 2005).

The theory used in this research is Foreign Policy. According to James N Rosenau, foreign policy analyzes and evaluates internal and external forces that influence foreign policy towards other countries (Rosenau, 2005). Meanwhile, according to K. J. Holsti, foreign policy is an action or idea designed by policymakers to solve problems or promote a change in the environment, namely in the policies of attitudes or actions of other countries. The idea of foreign policy can be divided into four components, from the general to the more specific, namely foreign policy orientation, national role, goals, and actions (Holsti, 2000). There are several sources in foreign policy: First, External Sources, namely External sources, are tools of the international system to influence the characteristics and behaviour of states and non-states. It includes all aspects of America's external form or an act abroad. The conditions of the international environment influence American foreign policy. Second, Social Sources. Social resources are non-governmental aspects of a political system that influence the external behaviour of the country. Third, Governmental Sources. Government resources are those aspects of the government structure that limit or increase voices in American foreign policymaking. Fourth, Role Sources. Role sources are essential because decision-makers are

influenced by social behaviour and legal norms in the role held by a person. The position of decision-makers holds their behaviour and input to foreign policy. Fifth, Individual Sources, Individual sources are a person's characteristics that influence behaviour and foreign policymaking, like the characteristics of a president that influences the behaviour of his foreign policy.

Foreign policy is a strategy or action plan formed by the decision-makers in dealing with other countries or other international political units and controlled in the national interest. Rosenau further defined foreign policy as "all the attitudes and activities through which organized nation societies seek and benefit from the international environment". Foreign Policy Decision Making as Problem Solving A rational problem-solving approach refers to something ideal, namely how to create an excellent foreign decision or something ideal. The ideal description is a possibility that can be applied to several situations and conditions, especially with the foreign policy of other countries.

### **III. Research Methods**

This research is a type of library research. In this study, researchers look for relevant information to the problem to be studied. Researchers examine several fundamental theories relevant to the problem to be studied. Researchers explore theories relevant to the research problem, make comparisons, and find concepts relevant to the main problems discussed in the research. Researchers are looking for a theoretical basis that guides problem-solving approaches and ideas for formulating hypotheses tested in research.

The researcher examines the results of previous studies related to the research to be carried out. It means that the results of previous research regarding the matter are to be studied, and other matters relating to the matter are to be studied. Researchers examine the results of previous studies directed at part or all of the research elements, namely: research objectives, methods, analysis, preliminary results, and conclusions. The result is a review of research similar to the problem to be studied that has been carried out in other places or the same place as the research area. The role of library research before research is significant because by doing this activity, the relationship between the problem, relevant research, and theory will become more apparent.

### **IV. Results and Discussion**

Australia's intervention in the issue of Timor Leste began when the territory (Timor Leste) was declared part of the Republic of Indonesia. Australia is very aggressive in helping Timor Leste; this can be seen with the assistance of the Australian military in helping restore security in Timor Leste after the 1999 referendum. As big countries, it usually has an interest in small countries and Australia. Australia has excellent interests in Timor Leste, both political and economic interests, which are the basis for Australia's new steps towards Timor Leste. Australia has made the issue of Timor Leste a public concern for Australia. The Australian government needs the support of the Australian people for the conditions in Timor Leste, as was the case during the implementation of its foreign policy in the East Timorese independence process.

Referring to its history, the relationship between Australia and East Leste has existed for a long time. Australia began to exert influence since the referendum process in mid-1999. Australia sent troops who were part of troops who were members of the UN peacekeeping mission to remain in Timor Leste to maintain the country's security. From a geographical

point of view, Timor Leste does have a very strategic value. At least, it can be seen from the number of countries that have opened diplomatic representation in Dili. Australia, the United States, Japan, Indonesia, New Zealand, Portugal, Malaysia, South Korea, Ireland, and the European Commission. In addition, several other countries have established diplomatic relations by concurrently serving as representatives with Jakarta. Australia wants to play its role in ensuring the security and stability of Timor Leste. Australia reiterates its support for long-term growth and development in Timor-Leste. It shows the value and importance of Timor Leste to Australia. During the PM Kevin Rudd period, his country's foreign policy focused on securing Australia from threats in the Asia-Pacific region than outside the region.

Foreign policy has resulted from a combination and reflection of domestic politics. It is influenced by the development of regional and international situations. Likewise, Australia's foreign policy cannot be separated from the influence of several factors. It includes the strategic geographical position, the potential for natural and human resources, and demographic composition and socio-political system, which significantly influence attitudes, perspectives, and the way they position themselves. in international forums. In the international sphere, fundamental changes in international dynamics and globalization. The currently characterized, among others, changes in the global political system from bipolar to multipolar, strengthening interlinkages between global, interregional, regional, sub-regional, and bilateral forums. The increasing role of non-state actors in international relations; and the emergence of new issues on the international agenda, such as human rights, democratization, the environment, Etc. The main impact is the blurring of boundaries and state sovereignty in relations between nations.

Australia's foreign policy can be analyzed through several factors that influence Australia's foreign policy, namely, domestic security and economic interests. In the field of security, it can be seen from the data of the Australian army in East Timor. Joined INTERFET from 1999-2008 East Timor (1999-2000), a multinational army in East Timor with the UN mandate to maintain peace, overcome crises and perform humanitarian tasks. It was commanded by Major General Peter Cosgrove of the Australian Armed Forces (ADF). Australia, the most sending country, Joined UNTAET or the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor five months after Interfet started operating. UNAMET or the United Nations Mission in East Timor with the Indonesian National Army and the New Zealand Armed Forces. At a later stage, in Canberra, PM Kevin Rudd stated that Australia wanted to play its role in ensuring the security and stability of Timor Leste. He reiterated his support for long-term growth and development in Timor-Leste. This statement shows the value and importance of Timor Leste to Australia. PM Kevin Rudd is more focused on securing Australia from threats in the Asia-Pacific region than outside the region regarding his country's defence policy.

According to him, the regional crisis directly affects national security. Military power must be projected into the surrounding area, which is considered vulnerable, unstable, economically weak, or fails to handle security and order. Australia always thought the enemy would come from the North. Therefore, the direction of defence was focused on the North. Timor Leste's security conditions are difficult to stabilize, and then an increasing number of Australian troops in Timor Leste. It provides an opportunity for Australia to strengthen its dominance over Timor Leste. Particularly about Indonesia. Regarding Australia's foreign policy, it can be taken from Alan Renouf's statement in his book "The Frightened Country". He said that Australia's foreign policy is very dependent on several things, including geographical, historical power, and national political factors.

Behind Australia's attitude lies a desire to control oil resources at the border. This access to energy is undeniably a driving force for Australia to intervene in dealing with the turmoil in Timor Leste after the ballot. According to Mudrajad, the Timor Gap agreement signed by Indonesia and Australia in 1989 divided the 62,000 square km cooperation zone into three regions. The joint development area in the middle and largest area where both countries can control oil and gas exploration and production. According to records in the Bayu-Undan field, it is estimated that it has oil reserves of 400 million barrels, three trillion cubic meters of natural gas, and 370 million barrels of liquid (condensate and LPG)<sup>5</sup>. The oil, which is described as having extensive content on the East Timor-Australia border, is an essential asset for the future economic development of the kangaroo country. Three thousand international security forces led by Australia have been in Timor Leste since the 2006 riots. The international community and UN assistance to overcome the crisis in the country were strengthened by the arrival of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. It still takes time to defuse the conflict in Southeast Asia's youngest country.

Moreover, there is also the root of a complicated dispute. In subsequent developments, foreign troops under Australian command must play an objective role as supervisors of dispute resolution between the warring camps. If Australia takes a role in taking into account its interests, the trap of a protracted conflict may await the people of Timor Leste.

Meanwhile, Australia's interests with an economic dimension are driven by the need to find new energy sources. The Timor Gap, which has been explored and is estimated to contain rich oil reserves, is the main reason for the future. It is also in Australia's interest that Timor Leste does not become a source of instability in the Southeast Asian region, which becomes its security buffer zone from northern attacks. There is no military base built by other countries. In addition to obtaining economic benefits, Australia's presence in Timor Leste also indicates defence and security interests. Understanding this objective must be seen from Australia's security interests over East Timor's internal environment and the security of Australia's strategic environment. In addition, these interests are also fought for in two periods of time, namely the present and the future (long term).

## **V. Conclusion**

Australia's short-term interest is to maintain the stability and security of Timor Leste because this is very much needed to support the smooth operation of exploration activities and the security of its investment in the Timor Gap. Meanwhile, the long-term goal is to prevent Timor Leste from falling into an increasingly severe economic downturn that could trigger it to become a failed state. The defence of national security is at stake if Timor Leste falls.

The threat of international terrorism is no longer a problem for specific countries, but every country around this region can sometimes become the target of this inhumane act. Australia, which acts as a representative of the United States in maintaining security and defence in the Asia Pacific region, views this condition as having the potential for the development of terrorism.

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