

Indonesia's Effort to Enforce the Sovereign Right in the North Natuna Sea amid the South China Sea Conflict

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ABSTRACT: *The conflict in the South China Sea is one of the conflicts in the ASEAN region. Indonesia's involvement in the South China Sea conflict began in 2012, when the People's Republic of China (PRC) made absolute claims over the entire South China Sea territory. This absolute claim also includes the North Natuna Sea area which intersects with the PRC's nine dash line claims. This paper attempts to elaborate on Indonesia's position in the conflict with the PRC in the North Natuna Sea using game theory and policies that have been and might be able to be implemented by Indonesia based on offense-defense theory and total defense doctrine. Indonesia is considered to have to avoid potential open conflicts that may occur with the PRC. Thus, it is considered that Indonesia should prioritize defensive action rather than offensive one. Policies in the form of increasing military presence and voicing rejection of the PRC's claims that have been applied so far are considered appropriate. However, alternative policies are needed to support the enforcement of Indonesia's sovereign rights in EEZ of the North Natuna Sea in the framework of total defense doctrine, among others, by increasing natural resource exploration in the North Natuna Sea and empowering fishermen there to maximize the presence of Indonesia in the area.*

KEYWORDS -South China Sea, North Natuna Sea, game theory, offense-defense theory, total defense doctrine

I. INTRODUCTION

The conflict in the South China Sea is one of the conflicts in the ASEAN region which currently still occurs between China and several ASEAN countries as claimant states, namely Vietnam, the Philippines, Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia. The South China Sea itself is a sea route for international shipping and trade with the highest traffic and this area is seen as an area of high economic and political value, so that the conflict vulnerability in this area is very high. (Noor, 2015). There are at least three points that are in the interest of claimant states to defend this area, namely (1) this area has abundant natural resource reserves, including oil, gas and other marine resources, (2) this area becomes international shipping trade traffic lanes connecting European, American and Asian trade routes, (3) economic growth that is currently happening massively in Asia (Junef, 2016). Therefore, the conflict that occurs in the South China Sea area is not only viewed from the aspect of national sovereignty of each country, but more broadly from the economic, political and even defense aspects. This is why big countries such as China and the US often carry out provocative policies that can disrupt stability and peace in the area. In addition, countries that are involved in conflict, especially those in ASEAN do not intend to give in and give up in this conflict, making this conflict constantly filled with tension and has the potential to trigger an open conflict in Southeast Asia (Noor, 2015).

The South China Sea covers the water and landmass of the two large islands, namely the Spratly and Paracels, as well as the Macclesfield River and Scarborough Reefs that stretch from Singapore, starting from the Malacca Strait to the Taiwan Strait. Disputes over ownership or territorial sovereignty in the South China Sea actually refer to sea and land areas in the two groups of Paracel and Spratly Islands. In both groups of islands, there are uninhabited islands, atolls, or corals (P3DI Setjen DPR RI, 2013). Although the South China Sea conflict is not only fixated on these two island groups (for example the dispute over Phu Quac Island in the Gulf of Thailand between Cambodia and Vietnam), multilaterally the action of mutual claims against the Spratly and Paracels Islands groups is higher in intensity and involves more actors. In terms of natural resource, the South China Sea has oil reserves of about 213 billion barrels (about 10 times the oil reserves of the United States) and

natural gas reserves which are the same as the total reserves of natural gas owned by Qatar. In the Spratly Islands alone, analysis by Clive Schofield and Ian Storey at asiaquarterly.com estimates that there are 1-2 billion barrels of oil and 225 tcf (trillion cubic feet) of natural gas. Meanwhile, the United States statistical agency, the Energy Information Administration (EIA) estimates that the Spratly Islands have at least 7 billion barrels of oil and 150.3 tcf (trillion cubic feet) of natural gas (Noor, 2015).

Initially, the PRC's claim to the South China Sea was based on the fact of Chinese version that their traditional fishermen had been exploring the Spratlys and Paracels since 200 BC and also claimed that there were settlements on the two islands from different dynasties who had ever ruled China at that time. This caused the PRC to decide that they had sovereignty over the territory of the South China Sea. According to the PRC, the name of the South China Sea itself comes from their ancestors and records from the Song and Yuan dynasties stating that this area is their territory. The PRC government, both the Kuomintang and the Communists, continue to insist that the South China Sea is their water. The change of power between the two in PRC has in no way changed the PRC's claim to the South China Sea (Junef, 2016). In 1947, the PRC Government issued a map detailing PRC's claim to sovereignty over the South China Sea with their benchmark of nine dash line. This claim was later refuted by ASEAN claimant states (Vietnam, Philippines, Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia) which stated that part of the South China Sea was their Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) up to 200 miles out to sea based on UNCLOS 1982 (P3DI Setjen DPR RI, 2013). Of all ASEAN countries, only the Philippines has brought a dispute over the South China Sea area to the International Arbitration Court in 2013 and then won over their lawsuit against the PRC in 2016. However, the PRC did not respond to the decision of the International Arbitration Court and continued their claim to this area (Junef, 2016).

Indonesia's involvement in the South China Sea conflict began in 2012, when the PRC made absolute claims over the entire South China Sea territory. This absolute claim also includes the Natuna Sea area (currently known as the North Natuna Sea). In the North Natuna Sea area, there are 9 points which are called the traditional fishing areas for Chinese fishermen (Tempo, 2013). Since then, there have been several incidents between Indonesia and China, both physically and politically in the South China Sea conflict. Some examples are the entry of the PRC's fishing vessels protected by their coast guard into the North Natuna Sea in March 2016, the PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs's critics toward Indonesia for changing the name Natuna Sea into North Natuna Sea in July 2017 and violations of Indonesia's EEZ area by the PRC's fishing vessels carrying out Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing (IUUF) in December 2019 (Ratriani, 2020).

Observing the development of the conflict that continues to escalate in the South China Sea, it is very likely that in the future this conflict will transform into an open conflict between the parties involved and have a negative impact on Indonesia. Therefore, Indonesia needs to formulate various strategies, especially in the field of defense, to maintain its sovereignty in the North Natuna Sea, which is part of the South China Sea conflict, and at the same time prevent this conflict from developing into an open conflict. This article attempts to describe the South China Sea conflict from a historical aspect, the position of the North Natuna Sea dispute faced with the overall claim of the PRC to the South China Sea, as well as the efforts that Indonesia can make to enforce sovereign rights in the North Natuna Sea EEZ.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

The method used in this study is qualitative. In qualitative research, the researcher is the main instrument in collecting and interpreting data, and other tools (if any) are only as assisting tool for the researcher (Hardani, et al., 2020). This study was conducted by reviewing or interpreting written material based on its context. The written materials were in the form of published notes, textbooks, newspapers, manuscripts, articles and similar previous studies. The stages of this study were selecting topics to be researched, exploring information, determining the focus of research, collecting data sources, reading data sources, finding relevant theories used to dissect the data obtained, analyzing based on relevant theories and the data, and subsequently drawing conclusions and recommendations.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The Ownership of the South China Sea from a Historical Aspect

For a long time, the South China Sea has been an important route for Chinese trade to India, the Gulf, the Middle East and even Europe. In pre-modern times, the Spratlys and Paracels were points that Chinese sailors avoided for security reasons. However, it is known that a Chinese sailor, Admiral Cheng Ho at that time visited the islands, without any intention of dominating or staying there. During the Ming dynasty, China's maritime success experienced a decline, followed by the increasing presence of Europeans in the Indian Ocean, which made it difficult for China to make territorial claims in the South China Sea area. Thus, in pre-modern times, the South China Sea did not belong to anyone, even though it had played an important role in international trade traffic (Bateman & Emmers, 2009).

Subsequently in modern times (the heyday of European maritime), the exploration of the South China Sea area was dominated by France, Britain and the Netherlands. However, the competition between the three for control of the South China Sea when compared with their competition to form a colony in Africa tends to be lower. In the 19th century, no European country made claims on or inhabited the islands of the South China Sea on a permanent basis. European countries still tend to regard the Spratly and Paracel Islands as hot spots for international trade. Military control of the South China Sea began in 1930, when France sent its warship *Malicieuse* to occupy the Spratly Islands. The control by France tended to be half-hearted because it was carried out only on the basis of the fear that this region might fall into the hands of Japan, which at that time was an emerging power country in Asia. On the other hand, the Kuomintang Government (KMT) in China has consistently rejected French control of the region. In general, at this time the control / claim to the South China Sea did not have high significance for European countries, because the vortex of the conflict tended to be more concentrated in Europe, not in Asia, so European countries saw the costs incurred for controlling the South China Sea outweighed the benefits (Bateman & Emmers, 2009).

The distraction experienced by European countries in the 4th decade of the 20th century was exploited by Japan to control Hainan in 1939, and then Spratly. Precisely in April 1939, Japan declared that Pratas, Paracel and Spratly belonged to their so-called "New Islands in the South". Entering World War II, the territory was still dominated by Japan. However, towards the end of World War II, Japanese strength in the region was weakened, slowly being replaced by the US presence during the Pacific fight led by General MacArthur. After World War II ended, ownership of the South China Sea area was not too significant for major powers, but China and France began to campaign for their claim back in this area, after the San Francisco Agreement in September 1951 which stated that Japan who lost World War II release all their claims to the Spratlys and Paracels. The claims of both parties continued between the Chinese and French Governments, which were then continued by Vietnam. The tension of dispute increased between the two, until in 1974, China launched an attack on Vietnam's control of the Paracel Islands (Bateman & Emmers, 2009).

The ownership significance of the South China Sea began during the Cold War era, with competition between the Western and Eastern Blocs, especially between North-South Vietnam and North-South Korea, where this water became one of the ideological battlegrounds between the two. At this time, the US domination was spread in the South China Sea in its interest to defend Taiwan from Chinese aggression. On the other hand, Vietnam tends to weaken its claim in the region to China, considering Vietnam needed Chinese assistance in their battle against the US in the Vietnam War (Bateman & Emmers, 2009).

After the Cold War, it is known that China made an ever greater expansion in this region, which raised concerns for countries that not only border the South China Sea such as ASEAN countries, but also countries that have an interest in maintaining the South China Sea as international sea route like the US. Therefore, until now, ASEAN countries bordering the South China Sea have tended to agree to resolve this maritime conflict with a non-violent approach. This agreement on paper also involves the US and China (Bateman & Emmers, 2009).

3.2 PRC Claims Versus Indonesia's Exclusive Economic Zone

The ownership of the South China Sea as a whole is difficult to determine. This is because since the beginning of the pre-modern era, where this area has begun to be used by various parties as a trade route between countries, no party has exclusively owned this area. Even at the time, the Spratly and Paracel Islands

which are now known as water areas rich in mineral resources, were avoided by sailors / traders for security reasons. On the other hand, since pre-modern times, no party has actually settled on the islands in the South China Sea, considering that this area did not play a significant role in wars or international politics at that time. Thus, the internationally-recognized ownership of this area holistically is increasingly difficult to determine.

The PRC attempted to overcome this stalemate to assert its overall claim to the South China Sea based on the nine dash line map issued in 1947, by constructing various military facilities to demonstrate their presence in the region. The problem is, the 'occupation' effort carried out by the PRC at various points in the South China Sea were carried out after the majority of the international world, including Indonesia and the PRC itself, ratified the 1982 UNCLOS which declared the sovereign rights of coastal states in their Exclusive Economic Zone (200 nautical miles from the coastline). In this EEZ, the those countries have the right to use natural resources, navigate or plant submarine cables (United Nations, 1982). Other countries that wish to utilize natural resources there must ask permission from the countries concerned (Idris, 2020).

This provision also applies to coastal states like Indonesia, which has rights such as exploration, exploitation, conservation and management of natural resources. In this case, the PRC as "another country" cannot make claims over the North Natuna Sea. Although from a historical point of view, the PRC's claims based on their 1947 nautical chart are much older than Indonesia's EEZ claims in the area, this claim does not have international legitimacy, which then deserves to be called a one-sided claim. The PRC's claim to the South China Sea area as a whole is also very difficult to prove, considering that from time to time, the South China Sea area has always changed its rulers and is used collectively by merchant ships from various countries, so there is no authentic evidence that can be recognized by all parties that this territory as a whole belongs to the PRC. On the other hand, Indonesia's EEZ claim to North Natuna, although relatively younger, has international legitimacy based on the 1982 UNCLOS, even from the PRC itself which ratified this convention in 1996 (United Nations, 2020). When referring to similar cases ever occurred and previously decided by the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) regarding the South China Sea, the PRC with their nine dash line claim is deemed to have violated UNCLOS 1982. Thus, both legally and internationally, Indonesia's claim to EEZ in North Natuna is much stronger than the PRC's unilateral claim which was based solely on the 1947 marine map that they issued themselves.



Figure 1. Conflict between Indonesia and the PRC in North Natuna Sea
Source: Tribun News, 2020

3.3 Game Theory of Indonesia-PRC in the Conflict of South China Sea

Game theory is a mathematical concept that can formulate possible strategies for individuals or entities when faced with complex challenges. This is based on the assumption that whatever the "game" is, there will be a strategy that can be used by either party to win the "game". Game theory today can be said to be nothing new, because it was discovered by John von Neumann and Oskar Morgenstern in 1944. At that time, game theory was only used in certain fields. However, currently the use of game theory has developed in such a way,

especially as a strategic analysis tool in situations involving many parties, where one party's decisions will depend heavily on decisions that other parties may make (Raouf & Al-Raweshidy, 2010).

David Jay Green in his book entitled "The Third Option for The South China Sea" suggests a simple game theory concept that can be used as an analysis tool for the actions of two countries involved in the conflict in the South China Sea. This concept divides the two actions that may be carried out by the two parties, namely aggressive actions or passive actions. The illustration can be seen from the following table:

Country A \ Country B	Passively assert claims	Aggressively assert claims
Passively assert claims	Parallel resource exploitation	Loss of any resources
Aggressively assert claims	Gain exclusive territorial rights	Loss of resources + open conflict

Figure 2. David Jay Green's Game theory in South China Sea Conflict
 Source: David Jay Green, 2016

In the upper left box, if both parties take passive / non-aggressive actions in making claims, then the situation will benefit both parties to exploit resources in the disputed area non-exclusively. In the lower left and upper right boxes, if one party takes aggressive action and the other party takes passive / non-aggressive action, then the party that acts aggressively will, within a certain period of time, acquire ownership of resources, including fishing right, transit right in the territory as well as the exploitation right of mineral resources. On the other hand, those who act passively will get nothing. The last one, in the lower right box, if both parties are aggressive, then the consequence is that both parties will lose access to resources in the area, plus the losses incurred due to open conflict (Green, 2016).

In the context of the conflict between Indonesia and the PRC in the North Natuna Sea, the simple concept of David Jay Green's game theory is considered applicable. In this conflict, of course, Indonesia does not want an open conflict with the PRC, considering that on the one hand, the PRC is a strategic economic partner for Indonesia with a large investment value. The PRC's military strength is also stronger when compared to Indonesia, so that in the event of an open conflict, it is likely that Indonesia will suffer a considerable loss. Thus, the lower right box, where both parties act aggressively and result in open conflict and loss of access to resources for both parties is certainly not an option for Indonesia.

Effort to uphold Indonesia's sovereign rights in EEZ of the North Natuna Sea can be carried out in the form of exploitation of natural resources, both fishing / marine products by fishermen and exploration of mineral as well as gas resources. Thus, the upper left box, in which Indonesia and the PRC are both passive, is a logical choice for Indonesia. With this situation, Indonesia and the PRC can both use natural resources in the disputed area. However, in this condition it should be noted that the use of natural resources by the PRC in the Indonesian EEZ needs to obtain a permit from Indonesia.

Furthermore, Indonesia needs to anticipate the aggressive behavior of the PRC which has recently been taking place, in order to avoid the situation of Indonesia being trapped in a passive behavior, while the PRC continues to be passive. If this situation occurs, referring to David Jay Green's game theory, Indonesia will lose

access to resources in the North Natuna Sea EEZ, which in turn will lose its sovereign rights in the area. Meanwhile, on the other hand, if Indonesia is passive, the PRC's aggressive behavior will make them have exclusive territorial rights in the North Natuna Sea, due to Indonesia's passive behavior which can be interpreted as an act of "agreeing" to the PRC's claims.

If possible, Indonesia needs to improve its bargaining position before the PRC in the North Natuna conflict, to force the PRC to be more passive in this case. The bargaining position that Indonesia can take advantage of is the important position of Indonesia as a country with a growing economy in Asia, faced with the position of the PRC, which is currently expanding its overseas market. On the other hand, as a neutral country and dominant country in ASEAN, Indonesia can offer a role as a facilitator between the PRC and other countries in ASEAN that are also disputing the South China Sea. If this can be done, it is likely that the PRC's dependence on Indonesia in ASEAN will increase, and in the end it could force the PRC to be more passive in the conflict in the North Natuna Sea. This situation can be used by Indonesia to increase its aggressiveness in the North Natuna Sea, so as to encourage the upholding of Indonesia's sovereign rights in this area.

3.4 The Application of Offense-Defense Theory by Indonesia in Upholding Sovereign Rights in the North Natuna Sea

The offense-defense theory begins with the concept of the security dilemma by Robert Jervis (1978), that the actions of a country to strengthen its security will result in weakening the security of other countries. In this case, if offense dominates, the security dilemma will increase, followed by an arms race and war is likely to occur. On the other hand, if the defensive measure dominates, then war will most likely be prevented (Alghifari & Letticia, 2016). At least there are several causes of war due to the dominance of offense over defense, as follows (Evera, 1998):

1. Countries tend to be easily controlled so that opportunities are open for other countries to expand;
2. Countries find it increasingly difficult to carry out self-defense, become increasingly insecure and strengthen themselves in a defensive manner;
3. The sense of insecure causes countries to fight the expansion of other countries in a harder way;
4. There are opportunities for countries as first attacker to increase the chances of a preemptive war;
5. Vulnerability becomes greater, increasing the chance of preventive warfare;
6. Fait accompli diplomacy is being used more frequently, which is prone to triggering war;
7. Disputes are difficult to resolve since negotiations often fail;
8. Countries keep their foreign and defense policies secret, increasing the chance of diplomatic blunders;
9. There was a rapid arms race;
10. Offense dominance is self-feeding. Countries will adopt policies that make it easier (for example, a more offensive military policy) for them to conquest.

The offense-defense theory is considered to be usable to analyze the steps that have been taken by Indonesia in the conflict in the North Natuna Sea with the PRC, so that these steps are not dominated by offensive steps, triggering open conflicts which in the end have an impact on losses for both parties. Thus, the next section will analyze the steps that have been taken by Indonesia using the offense-defense theory in upholding sovereign rights in the North Natuna Sea.

3.5 Increasing the Presence of the Indonesian Military in the North Natuna Sea

Indonesia has begun increasing its military presence in the North Natuna Sea. One of them was the formation of the Composite Battalion 1 / Gardapati in Natuna which consisted of units from the Indonesian Army, Navy, and Air Force. In this area, the Indonesian Army also alerted three large ships (KRI), namely the Bung Tomo class frigate, the Diponegoro class corvette and the TNI Parchim class corvette. The plan is for a squadron of fighter aircraft to be deployed in Natuna to carry out air patrol operations with maritime strike capability (Tribun Jogja, 2020). At the end of November 2020, the Indonesian Navy deployed 9 warships and one fighter aircraft to hold an Operation Exercise in Natuna (Sorongan, 2020).

The increase in Indonesia's military presence in the North Natuna Sea is Indonesia's effort to create a deterrent effect for the PRC and for other claimant states in the South China Sea conflict that have the potential

to violate Indonesia's EEZ area. The presence of troops and defense equipment will make it easier for Indonesia to increase supervision of possible violations, so that it can be anticipated quickly to avoid the escalation of diplomatic tensions between countries that could occur as a result of these violations. The increase in Indonesia's military presence in this area also reflects the affirmation of Indonesia's rejection of the PRC's unilateral claim and shows Indonesia's seriousness in protecting its territorial sovereignty.

Reviewing from the offense-defense theory, Indonesia's action to strengthen its military in the North Natuna Sea is a defense measure, in which Indonesia seeks to improve its defense capabilities against possible attacks and violations from outside parties. Therefore, it is predicted that Indonesia's actions will not lead to a security dilemma since increasing Indonesia's defense efforts will not be counterproductive to the defense efforts of other countries, both the PRC and claimant states in ASEAN. It is possible that Indonesia's effort will be followed by other claimant states in ASEAN amid the increase of the PRC military activity in the South China Sea. However, it is estimated that this will not lead to an arms race among ASEAN claimant states, for the increase in defense capability tends to be done more to anticipate offense, not to attack the other party. Such effort needs to be made in the future since the presence of the military in the North Natuna Sea will certainly strengthen Indonesia's bargaining position in front of the PRC and claimant states in ASEAN which will ultimately strengthen Indonesia's diplomacy effort. (Sudarsono, Mahroza, & Surryanto, 2018).

3.6 Making Diplomacy Effort to Reject the PRC's Unilateral Claims

In the South China Sea conflict, Indonesia during the administration of President Joko Widodo focuses on effort to protect its interests in the North Natuna Sea (Connelly, 2017). After the PRC's unilateral claim to the entire South China Sea area, Indonesia continues to firmly voice its rejection of this claim in international forums. Repetitive rejection is considered effective in avoiding vacuum, in order that Indonesia does not appear to accept the PRC's claim against the entire South China Sea, which includes the North Natuna Sea. (Natalegawa, 2020). In May 2020, for instance, Indonesia sent two verbal notes or submissions to the United Nations (UN) which confirmed that Indonesia was not a country that has dispute in the South China Sea. This note also emphasizes Indonesia's position in rejecting the PRC's nine dash line claims since it does not have an international legal basis, and is very contrary to the 1982 UNCLOS (CNN Indonesia, 2020). Indonesia's rejection of the PRC's claim in the South China Sea received praise from the US during the visit of US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo who met Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi in October 2020 (Zaka, 2020). In November 2020 at the 37th ASEAN Summit, the President of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, at the ASEAN-PRC Summit, said that all parties involved in the South China Sea conflict can restrain themselves. In addition, President Joko Widodo also stressed the importance of respecting international law by all parties if they attempt to see the South China Sea peaceful and stable (Arbar, 2020).

The objections that continue to be voiced by Indonesia against the PRC's claim in the South China Sea are tangible manifestation of Indonesia's foreign policy in this area which is explicitly directed at the goals, conditions and actors that are outside Indonesia's territory to be influenced (Carlsnaes, 1992). In this regard, Indonesia's statements in international forums are intended to influence other countries involved in the conflict in the South China Sea to maintain stability in the area. Indonesia's goal is to create a conducive situation in the South China Sea, which ultimately benefits all parties. Moreover, even though Indonesia is not positioned as the Chair of ASEAN, it is considered as de facto leader of ASEAN which is predicted to be able to influence the policies of ASEAN countries as claimant states in this area (Natalegawa, 2020).

Indonesia's attitude that continues to reject the PRC's claims is also in line with Indonesia's foreign policy priorities in the second term of President Joko Widodo's administration, better known for its 4 + 1 foreign policy priorities. One of the important points in this foreign policy priorities is the diplomacy of sovereignty and nationality, where Indonesia's sovereignty as a country cannot be negotiated, and border disputes will be resolved with intensified effort through negotiations (Kementerian Luar Negeri RI, 2019).

Analyzing from the offense-defense theory, Indonesian diplomacy rejects the PRC's claim to the North Natuna Sea as a defense measure, that Indonesia seeks to maintain its territorial integrity in accordance with international law. This step is appropriate in responding to the PRC's attitude which has recently been increasingly offensive in the South China Sea, including in the North Natuna Sea. Indonesia's defensive actions

do not allow a vacuum which can be interpreted as an agreement to the PRC's claim to the entire South China Sea area, so that expansion by the PRC is not easy to carry out. On the other hand, Indonesia's diplomatic efforts have also increasingly opened up opportunities for conflict resolution through negotiation. Ultimately, Indonesia's defensive actions are thought to reduce the risk of open war / conflict between the two sides.

3.7 Alternative Strategies for Indonesia in the Framework of Total Defense

3.7.1 Increasing Exploration of Natural Resources in the North Natuna Sea

It is well known that the South China Sea, including the North Natuna Sea, is rich in natural resources. Until now, natural resource exploration by Indonesia in this area has not been optimal. This is proven by the discovery of new oil and gas reserves through the drilling of the Terubuk-5 exploration well, the South Natuna Sea B Working Area by Medco E&P Natuna in September 2020. (Agung, 2020). Based on data from the Special Task Force for Upstream Oil and Gas Business Activities, currently there are nine oil and gas blocks in Natuna waters that are being developed. Oil production in Natuna as of 16 November 2020 reached 18,469.1 barrels per day (bpd) and gas production was 402.7 million cubic feet per day (MMSCFD). Compared to the national gas production which reached 6,734 MMSCFD on average until September 2020, this means that gas production in Natuna waters is only about 6% of the national gas production (Umah, 2020).

Natural resource exploration in the North Natuna Sea is important to be improved to increase Indonesia's presence in the area. The lack of current exploration possibly gives the impression to the PRC that this area is not being cared of. As a result, the PRC might consider expansion feasible, and it will be even more offensive. The increase in natural resource exploration in the North Natuna Sea which adds to Indonesia's presence in this area can be regarded as Indonesia's effort to anticipate the PRC's offensive attitude, so that expansion by the PRC is not feasible.

Increasing exploration of natural resources by Indonesia in this area is vital to strengthen Indonesia's presence (not only the military). This increased presence shows that Indonesia cares about the development and utilization of border areas, so other countries, including the PRC, will not easily claim that the North Natuna Sea EEZ is part of its territory which is included in the South China Sea area. Increasing natural resource exploration in the North Natuna Sea, apart from bringing economic benefits, will also bring about another positive multiplier effect, namely the arrival of workers who can indirectly be used to increase efforts to monitor potential violations that occur by foreign ships in the North Natuna Sea. Workers exploring the North Natuna Sea need to be organized in such a way, which can be coordinated by one of the Ministries / Agencies to establish a rapid reporting mechanism in case they encounter violations or suspected violations by foreign ships in the North Natuna Sea. By this effort, the prosecution of violating foreign ships can be conducted quickly and in the end it can reduce the number of violations by foreign ships in this area.

3.7.2 Empowering Fishermen to Establish Early Detection Mechanisms and Early Prevention of Threats

Fishermen are considered to have an important role to improve defense in the marine area. This can be seen from the discovery of a seaglider on December 26, 2020 by fishermen in Selayar water, South Sumatra, which was previously suspected of being a marine drone. (Yahya, 2021). It is not yet known further about the reason for the existence of a seaglider that can be used by foreign parties for defense or research in Selayar water, but it is clear that the discovery of this seaglider shows the sensitivity of fishermen to defense efforts in Indonesia's marine areas.

It is known that the interest of fishermen to participate in exploiting marine resources in Natuna is quite high. In January 2020, the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries recorded at least 470 fishermen who wanted to participate in sailing in Natuna water. The government needs to take advantage of the high interest of fishermen to increase the presence of Indonesian fishermen in the North Natuna Sea. Fishermen are a part of the supporting components of national defense which have a strategic role, where in group networks, the presence of fishermen can help the apparatus in overcoming the limited supporting facilities and infrastructure in national defense effort (Yanti, 2014). Therefore, the presence of fishermen in the North Natuna Sea needs to be

organized, in addition to maximizing fishing, to support monitoring activities in this area, which is currently quite difficult for the authorities due to limited resources. The fishermen need to be provided with supplies, especially the Indonesian Army, to detect various potential threats in North Natuna waters and report them quickly to the authorities on duty. An early detection mechanism and early prevention of threats will be established, making it easier for the authorities to uphold Indonesia's sovereign rights in these waters.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The PRC's unilateral claim over the entire South China Sea in 2012 has made the conflict in this area more complex and made Indonesia one of its actors, in relation to Indonesia's sovereign rights in the North Natuna Sea EEZ. In accordance with the analysis on David Jay Green's game theory, Indonesia needs to avoid potential open conflicts that may occur with the PRC since it will harm both parties. Thus, it is considered that Indonesia should prioritize defensive action rather than offensive one. The policies that have been carried out by Indonesia, either by increasing the military presence or by continuing to voice rejection of the PRC's claim to this area in international forums, are regarded appropriate. However, alternative policies are needed to support the upholding of Indonesia's sovereign rights in the North Natuna Sea EEZ within the framework of the total defense doctrine, including the following:

1. The Indonesian government needs to increase its natural resource exploration in the North Natuna Sea to emphasize Indonesia's presence as a concrete form of Indonesia's sovereign rights in this area.
2. The Indonesian government needs to empower fishermen to increase fishing in the North Natuna Sea, which can be utilized by the Indonesian security forces in order to detect early and prevent violations and potential violations of foreign ships in the North Natuna area.

From an academic perspective, studies regarding Indonesia's involvement in the South China Sea conflict need to be conducted more deeply with relevant theories in order to produce input for the Indonesian Government's policies in managing this conflict more appropriately.

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