CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Problem Background

The southern Thailand conflict (Patani) has been a longstanding conflict. The conflict has been between government and separatism group. In the world, there have been many conflict stories about independent and separatism, such as countries in Southeast Asia like Malaysia had its independence from Britain, Indonesia had struggled to get its independence from Netherland, Cambodia had its independence from French, Philippine had its independence from United State and so on. Although those countries got their independences to colonial countries but domestic conflict; such as Indonesia with Aceh, Philippine with Mindanao and Thailand with separatism group are still exist, these conflicts especially happen related to ethnics, cultures, religions, borders, politics circled and groups of interest. Every day, there are increase of subnational conflict which happen whereby many reasons and many ideologies which established many groups to against the government. Sometimes the government called that group as "terrorist", a party which has difference ideologies with state; perhaps they used several ways to oppose government as bombing the police station, military office, government service and so on. Currently, terrorism are changing to be more dangerous such as choosing the place with many tourists to be bombed which indirectly means the aim of bomb is to destroy the economic and national security.

The meaning of "Patani" is the territory in part of the kingdom of Langkasuka now has been the part of Thailand. There are three provinces Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat,

and four district of Songkhla. The conflict happened between Thai government and separatist movement has been rooted since long time ago and the separatist group has caused by several reasons. The causes of the conflict were a different nation (imagined notions of an earlier Patani nation), a different religion (Islam rather than Buddhism) different ideology, and ethnic conflict.

The network of the Malay Ulama and their role as custodians of religious and ethnic tradition make them important players in the conflict. The first person to bring Malay Muslim nationalist ideas to Southern Thailand was the Islamic cleric Haji Sulong, who was a reformist and political activist educated in Mecca. Upon returning to Pattani in 1930, he was engaged in the reform of the Malay Muslim community and represented its interests to the government by seeking political autonomy within a federal system. In 1947, Haji Sulong made seven demands to the central government, focusing on political freedom for the Malays and the preservation of their language. His only religious demand involved the recognition and enforcement of Muslim law.[1] And demand of Haji Sulong was about the nature of political relations between the Malay Muslims and the Thai state. It essentially called for a review of the political status of the Malay Muslims in the South and that their rightful place in the modern Thai nation-state was as equal citizens with distinctive rule and government. Other demands demonstrated their desire for respect and equal treatment for the Malay ethnicity and Islamic practice. Therefore the government of Thamrong rejected the pleas saying they were a return to the previous old sultanate kingdom in which the power to rule resided in one person. At that time, the concept of autonomy and self-determination was rarely heard in the Thai political discourse. The key concept was (and still is) a unified one

---

[1] M. L. Thomas, "Thai Muslim Separatism in South Thailand," in Forbes, op. cit., p. 21.

nation-state based on Thai nationalism. Since his mysterious death in 1954, Haji Sulong has become a symbol of resistance to the Thai state.

Islamic fundamentalist violence in Thailand centers on the separatist activities of the Malay Muslim population in the country's southern provinces of Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat. Historically constituted as part of the former kingdom of Patani (Patani Darussalam), three main pillars have traditionally underscored Malay separatist identity in this region first a belief in the virtues and "greatness" of the kingdom of Patani, second an identification with the Malay race, and third a religious orientation based on Islam. These base ingredients are woven together in the tripartite doctrine of hijra (flight), imam (faith), and jihad (holy war), which collectively assert that all Muslim communities have both a right and duty to withdraw from and resist any form of persecution that is serving to place their survival in jeopardy.[2]

Shortly situation after Thaksin Shinawatra became prime minister in early 2001, violence in Patani was once again on the rise. For political reasons, Thaksin set out to undermine key elements of the Prem era deal, disbanding the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Center (SBPAC) a government agency which had dispensed patronage and worked closely with Malay Muslim political religious leaders and putting the police, rather than the army, in charge of security in the region (Thaksin had once been a police officer). Thaksin's missteps coincided with a revival of insurgent activity, as a new generation of militants had become increasingly disillusioned with their former leaders. A bold attack on a Narathiwat army base in January 2004 resulted in four soldiers killed and a large cache of weapons seized, and marked a return to fully-fledged

---

[2] Peter Chalk, The Malay-Muslim Insurgency in Southern Thailand Understanding the Conflict's Evolving Dynamic, p 2

insurgency. Major incidents followed that year, most notably simultaneous attacks on 12 security checkpoints and bases in April, culminating in the bloody storming of the historic Kru-Ze mosque. This was followed in October by the Tak Bai incident, in which 78 Malay Muslim men were suffocated during their incarceration in military trucks. All of these incidents were huge propaganda victories for the insurgents.

While nothing on the scale of Kru-Ze or Tak Bai has happened since, a relentless war of insurgent attrition has continued until the present day. Militants have made repeated changes of tactics while the military has used a variety of responses including mass arrests and attempts to remove suspected insurgents and sympathizers from their communities for periods of 'training' in army camps outside the region. None of these methods has achieved much success, and may indeed have hardened anti-state attitudes among Malay Muslims in the region. More recently, there has been an increasing focus by the militants on hard targets, especially members of the Thai security forces.

The resurgence of Patani conflict by separatism movement began in 2001. The identity of actors pushing for conflict remains mostly obscure. Many local and regions have implicated the region's traditional separatist group such as Barisan National Pembebasan (BNPP, National Front of Patani liberal), Barisan Islam pembebasan Patani (BIPP, Islamic liberal Front of Patani), Pertubuhan Perpaduan Patani (PULO, Pattani United Liberation Organization), Gerakan Mujahidin Patani (GMP, Patani Mujahidin Movement), Berisan Revolusi National (BRN, National Revolution Front) and particularly the BRN-coordinate (a faction of BRN).

National Revolutionary Front "*Barisan Revolusi Nasional*" (BRN) is a separatist movement in Patani or Southern Thailand. Originally founded on March 13, 1963 by

Haji Abdul Karim Hassan, by 1984 the group was divided into three main factions; BRN Congress, led by Rosa Burako, is the military wing or which sought to stay the course of armed struggle and the most active of the three groups, continuing to conduct military operations, BRN Coordinate is a political wing and consisted of leaders and members who agreed that there was a need to consolidate its ranks, particularly given the gradual erosion of support for the struggle. In hindsight, the strategy of BRN-Coordinate to rebuild through mobilization of pemuda (youths), BRN Ulama is focused on political and religious activities and was previously led by Haiji Abdul Kaerim until his death.

Secret negotiation between Thai government and separatist leader happened amid a wave of insurgency in 2005. Langkawi peace dialogue, when the Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra dispatched top military security intelligence chief and the head of the Nation Security Council (NSC) of Thailand to Langkawi Malaysia for dialogue allowing Thai official to meet some of separatist groups. After Langkawi talk, some negotiations and peace dialogues resurfaced again such as the Geneva process initiated, during the Surayud administration and Bogor talk initiated, during the proxy-Thaksin administration of Saman Sundaravey are discussed. The following administration of Abhisit Vejjajiwat tried to revive some of the initiatives put forth had failed. For Yingluck Shinawat administration the first negotiation revealed to republic are Kuala lumpur talk between the Thai government represented by National Security Council (NSC) and the National Revolution Front (BRN) signed "a general consensus document on a peace negotiation process".

After 10 years of violence, Thai government try to made political solution, on February 28th, 2013, the Thai Government represented by the National Security Council

(NSC) and the most powerful resistance separatist group, the National Revolutionary Front (BRN), signed a General Consensus on Peace Dialogue Process[3] (KL-peace process). The event came into existence with the active support of the Malaysian government.

B. Research question

Why did peace negotiation process between Thai government and Revolution National Front (BRN) under Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra administration fail in resolving Southern Thailand conflict?

C. Theoretical Framework

In the idea of state, one could not forget about the idea of conflict as a part of society should not be forgotten. Conflicts are something usual in pluralist democratic society[4] because all of different interest, aim, and perception toward something. It could happen among societies, society and government, government and government (state versus state) and several issues of conflict such as separatist movement in religion, ethnic etc.

The existence of conflict is influenced by actors of conflict as what Kneitschel proposed:

> They can violently confront each other in a zero-sum contest, expressing maximalist goals and intransigent demands, without the readiness to compromise. Or they can act in a flexible manner, by dialogue, negotiation and compromise thus converting the win-lose

---

[3] Don Pathan, Negotiation the Future of Patani, PATANI FORUM, 2014, p. 93.
[4] Kneitschel, Dietmar. 2000. Conflict Resolution Peace Studies (An introductory Handbook); Foreword. Edt. Jayadeva Uyangoda

option of the violent alternative of conflict resolution into mutually beneficial win-win- perspective.[5]

From that statement different ways or approaches are needed to settle the conflict. Conflicting parties may use military forces for peaceful settlement, and the actors of conflict can determine the direction of conflict itself.

The southern Thailand conflict, between the government of Thailand and Revolution National Front (BRN), under Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra administration, attempted to bring the idea of peace process to solve the conflict. As the first stage a negotiation process was made between both actors producing "general consensus on peace negotiation process" in Kuala Lumpur (KL) in 2013. A negotiation could take part even thought a war could happened after the negotiation process. According to Fishe and Ury "negotiation is art of talk about different interest toward an acceptable agreement to the warring parties".[6] Therefore the meaning of negotiation is referring to both parties which make concession; it can be intervened by their party as the mediator of negotiation before deciding the next step.

Although negotiation becomes one peaceful settlement processes for solving any conflict, there is no guarantee for the success of that process. Sometime, the negotiation will find themselves in the deadlock situation and the negotiation will fail especially in the case of separatism conflict. As well as Jayadeva Uyangoda said: "when the conflict is over identity-ethnic or religion-the room for compromise solution becomes more

---

[5] ibid
[6] Fisher, Roger, Ury, William and Bruce patton.2008. Getting to Yes: Teknik Berunding Menuju Kesepakatan Tanpa Memaksakan Kehendak Trans. Daniel Haryono and Gloria Situmorang. Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia page 58

constrained".[7] This happens in several conflicts especially in separatism conflicts like what happened when Sri Lanka government fought against separatism conflict (Macan Tamil) and similar with southern Thailand conflict when Thai government fought against separatist group such as BRN.

Based on Uyangoda's study on the analysis of separatist conflict, the difficulty of negotiation process in the case of ethnic and separatism conflict is to get an agreement. Further, Uyangoda mentions four variables that become the factor why the negotiation process tend to fail in the case of separatism issues.[8]

1. Maximalist of insurgents

Usually in the internal armed conflict or separatism conflict, the conflict is more difficult to be solved because the resistance movement makes a hard bargain in the negotiation process. The resistant movement has a particular demand to be a separated state or to be independent as their objective. Because of these reasons, both parties are difficult to achieve agreement between them.

> When an insurgent movement or separatism has set a maximalist goal for example, the capturing of state power, or establishing a separate state – there is usually reluctance on the part of that movement to revise its goal to accept something less than the original, final objective.[9]

This conflict is also propelled by idealistic motivation. In case of separatist issues in southern Thailand, the BRN had the appropriate objective to get independence for Malay-Patani in Southern Thailand from Government of Thailand. However, Thai

[7] Uyangoda Jayadeva. 2000, Conflicti Resolution & Peace Studies, (An introductory Hanbook): Negotiation in Conflict. Srilanka: Eriedrich Ebert Stiftung, Pg 26
[8] Ibid page 27
[9] Ibid

government is absolute country that it would not separate Southern Thailand as other state. It is supported by the idealistic framework that compromising and talking with the "enemy" seem to be incorrect, immoral and harmful to the final goal of conflicting party. Thus, in a negotiation process getting consensus toward the idea for settling the dispute is not easy.

2. Inflexibility of the state

State often view insurgent challenge as law–and-order problem that should be solved by the use of military force and tend to see them as domestic problem. The negotiation processes tend to be viewed as the weakness of the state and give the legitimacy to the "enemy" (the existence of rebellion). Therefore, state often tends to be intransigent and uncompromising. This factor makes it difficult for a negotiation to result in an agreement of both parties. In this circumstance, the negotiation gives impacts such as legitimating the enemy and confronting each party's dilemma. This also supports the statement of Uyangoda on the inflexibility of the state:

> In such circumstances, negotiation may be seen as (I) giving legitimacy to the enemy's claim and (II) the admission of enemy's strength vis-à-vis the weakness of the state. Therefore, states often tend to be intransigent and uncompromising; until such time that the conflict itself compels the state to seek a negotiation option.[10]

The conflict happened in Southern Thailand between Thai government and BRN is particularly related to separatism issues. The reluctance of Thai government Under Yingluck administration made the negotiation process fail. The condition above become the main factor of Thai government under Yingluck administration in regarding the settlement process of Southern Thailand conflict toward negotiation just compels

---

[10] Ibid

condition. It showed unwillingness of Yingluck administration in responding the separatism issues in Southern Thailand.

D. Hypothesis

Some hypothesis drawn from the failure of the peace negotiation process between Thai government and BRN in solving southern Thailand conflict (Patani conflict) are caused by two factors, i.e.:

1. The separatist group has maximalist of goal for independent there were excessive goals or demand from during negotiation process that were difficult to be accepted to achieve agreement by both parties.

2. The inflexibility of the state shows the government response to separatism conflict use the law and order problem by the military offensive to solve it. The reluctance of government to resolve conflict by using compromise with the separatist group and that both parties lack of mutual trust so negotiation fail.

E. Method of research

Several ways are used to collect the data in order to conduct the research to discuss the conflict and negotiation process as follows:

1. Theories were used as a tool of analysis and basic stand of explanation the phenomena on the dynamic conflict and negotiation process between Thai government and separatist movement data are compiled from various resources such as books, magazines, journals, newspapers, available websites and other relevant sources related about this case.

2. Media research such as YouTube, websites, internet is also used in order to find reference and sources to accomplish the explanation of conflict and negotiation process.

F. Objective of Research

The objectives of research are:

1. As the requirement to fulfill one of the subject in international relations studies.
2. To describe and explain the history and situation in the southern border province of Thailand.
3. To seek an alternative way or conflict resolution; a case study of the separatist movement in the southern border province of Thailand.
4. To implement the political concept of international relations directly to explain the case that is relevant to the problem.
5.

G. Scope of Research

The research data focusing on the dynamic of the settlement process between Thai government and separatist movement and the scope of writer started from the beginning of separatist movement and in southern border province Thailand since 2004 and the KL peace negotiation dialogue between Thai government and separatism group (BRN) took place in 2013 process. This time limitation was used in order to ease the observation of the problem as well as to avoid the complexity of the further analysis.

H. System of writing

CHAPTER I discussed about the introduction of the paper. It consists of explanation about background, Research Question, Theoretical Framework, Hypothesis, Method of Research, Scope of Research, and System of Writing.

CHAPTER II described the historical record of Sothern Thailand conflict between Thai government and separatist group. Including the Geographical situation of southern Thailand, history of root conflict and insurgency in Southern Thailand the Barisan Revolusi Nasional Malay Patani (BRN).

CHAPTER III discussed about the peace negotiation process between government of Thailand and separatist group (BRN is the main group) under PM Yingluck Shinawatra. This part was followed by negotiation process of Patani conflict and several agenda of peace dialogue by both parties.

CHAPTER IV would be the answer of question as part of analysis and explaining about failure factor of peace negotiation process by using Uyangoda's perspective on separatism conflict.

CHAPTER V will give the conclusion from all chapters and also give suggestion.