

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### **A. Significance**

The reason for me to choose the topic about the relationship of the US and Cuba is the first, as I know, the researchers for Latin America study are not as many as researchers for other region countries study. For the first, I am interested in America Latin study and looking for more news and development of that country. Until finally I finds a country in the Caribbean region that has a long story with the US, that is Cuba. I am interested in the relation of the US and Cuba. Second, I follow both countries' news particularly about their relations since their disengagement in their diplomatic relation. Based on the news released in the end of 2014, there is a changing situation of both countries. From here, after in the stagnant situation of diplomatic disengagement, the US and Cuba are starting to re-establish their relation. I have a curiosity to write about the US and Cuba relations to reveal the factor behind the decision, especially in the US perspective.

## **B. Background**

Life is about a relationship between the components that occur therein. Its components require human to communicate and interact with each other, because they are the social being who need each other, in order to improve their welfare. The relations between countries in this world also require interaction either directly or indirectly. Various forms of the relationship are different among countries like friendships, disputes, hostility, and even warfare.

A conflict is one outcome of the communication or interaction in a relationship, which eventually forms one kind of relationship. Conflicts can occur because of the multilevel interaction between the variables in them, which are influenced by the dynamic environment in the cycle of life. They will always happen in this life due to various factors. Then, it cannot be denied that international relations will also bring up conflicts as a result of the relationship among countries.

Cuba is one of the countries in Latin America, particularly in the Caribbean region, which has been running the sanction of the US, the embargo and the severance of diplomatic relations for more than half a century. Sanctions in 1961 are constituted by the increasing of Cuba's trade with the Soviet Union, nationalizing the US-owned property until the declaration of Cuba as a socialist state and the development of Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba.

The relations of the US and Cuba were started 200 years ago when the US tried to expel Spain that had colonized Cuba for 370 years. There was a beneficial relation resulting the liberation of Cuba from Spain in 1899. However, the liberation of Cuba became the beginning of the US domination and the exploits over Cuba. According to the US, there is right to dominate the island under political, economic, and military reason.<sup>1</sup> There was a purchasing mechanism that the US did to Cuba from Spain in 1898.

From the US colonization, a political conflict appeared when Fidel Castro as a revolutionary movement overthrew the Cuban government held by Fulgencio Batista. Under Fidel government, Cuba started to nationalize the US-owned property, declared it as a socialist state, and developed Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba. It all made the US president took the decision to give full economic embargo and severe diplomatic relation with Cuba in 1961.

The US tightening embargo toward Cuba since 1961, even the collapse of the Soviet Union, is still implemented.<sup>2</sup> In particular time, there was a tightening embargo that was implemented to Cuba by several presidents of the US. Under the Kennedy administration in early 1963 covert attack with economic warfare, intended to tighten Cuban economy

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<sup>1</sup> Provest, G. (2011). The Obama Administration and Cuba: The Clinton Administration Revisited. *The International Journal of Cuban Studies*, 2011: 311-327, 394-395.

<sup>2</sup> Lee, Brianna. US-Cuba Relations. Council on Foreign Relations (Google Scholar), February 2014.

and isolate the Cuban from the community.<sup>3</sup> Under the Clinton administration, the US continued tightening embargo with the signing of Cuban liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act (Helm-Burton) 1996.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to tightening the embargo, in 2000 Clinton signed Dodd law about the sale of food and medicine to Cuba, but it was limited and there was no credit-financial permitted.<sup>5</sup> However, this leeway was not enough to help Cuba. The tightening embargo was also imposed by George W. Bush, which sharply decreased Americans like students or artists who travel to Cuba or vice versa.<sup>6</sup>

The relations between the US and Cuba for half a century have ups and down situation. Several efforts have been made through various sanctions, from tightening the sanctions until loosening the sanctions. Several policies have also been made. However, for half a century the government of Cuba has not changed. It remains as a socialist state and still led by Castro's family, which is full of dictatorship. It makes the US and Cuba remain the same with no diplomatic relation.

But, in the early years of the new US president in 2009, at the beginning of Obama administration, the United States seemed to show friendly gesture toward Cuba. This is apparent from some of the significant changes like when the democratic party had a campaign in

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<sup>3</sup> Rabe, S. G. After the missiles of October: John F. Kennedy and Cuba, November 1962 to November 1963. *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 2000: 714-726.

<sup>4</sup> Falk, P. S. The US-Cuba Agenda Opportunity of Stalemate. *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* (ProQuest), 1997: 153-162.

<sup>5</sup> Provest, G. op. cit.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

2008 that brought Obama as the nominated president for the US, told that they will allow Americans to visit their family in Cuba.<sup>7</sup> It is fulfilled after Obama became the new president of the US in 2009. The US also compromised with the OAS in order to lift Cuba's suspension received by Cuba since 1962, which in June 3th, 2009 Cuba can participate as the member of the Organization of American States.<sup>8</sup>

Eventually, in the end of 2014 both the US and Cuba intended to normalize their relations with the emergence of some real indicators. The real indicators are like: Obama and Raul gave an official statement about normalizing diplomatic relation with Cuba on December 17th, 2014<sup>9</sup>, the US released alleged Cuban five and Cuba released Alan Gross, the US officially lifted its designation of Cuba as a state sponsor of terrorism on May 29th, 2015, the US re-opened its embassy on August 14th, 2015, and the US went further by easing restriction on travel and remittance in 12 categories of travel in January 2015.

There are supports from the Americans people on lifting the embargo, normalizing relation, lifting sponsor terrorism, and lifting travel restriction toward Cuba. However, the poll shows that 56% of Americans

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<sup>7</sup> *The New York Times*. (2008, June 1). Retrieved October 15, 2015, from The New York Times - Democrats See Cuba Travel Limits as a Campaign Issue in Florida: <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/01/us/01florida.html>

<sup>8</sup> *CNN News*. (2009, June 3). Retrieved October 15, 2015, from CNN News - OAS lifts 47-year-old suspension of Cuba: [http://edition.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/americas/06/03/cuba.oas/index.html?\\_s=PM:WORLD](http://edition.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/americas/06/03/cuba.oas/index.html?_s=PM:WORLD)

<sup>9</sup> *The White House*. (2014, December 17). Retrieved march 7, 2015, from The White House web site - Statement by the President on Cuba Policy Changes: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press->

are in favor of changing the US policy toward Cuba.<sup>10</sup> It means that there are still many, forty percent more, who refused it. However, Obama still took the decision to normalize relations with Cuba. So it is interesting to reveal the factors behind Obama's policy to normalize relation between the US and Cuba in 2014-2015.

### **C. Research Question**

From the background that describes the dynamic relation between the US and Cuba from 200 years before, followed by the US and Cuba for five decades that showed no change, then after all this time, under the Obama administration the US wants to have a normal relationship with Cuba, which originally had been broken off since 1961. Then a question emerges *“Why did the US under Obama administration intend to normalize diplomatic relations with Cuba in 2014-2015?”*

### **D. Theoretical Framework/ Approach**

The conflict has a life cycle that is not linear and dependent on the dynamics of the conflict environment. In addition, conflict cannot be reduced to a single variable and should be seen as a phenomenon that occurs because the multilevel interaction of various variables or factors. It needs a grand theory--that can be used from the beginning to the end of

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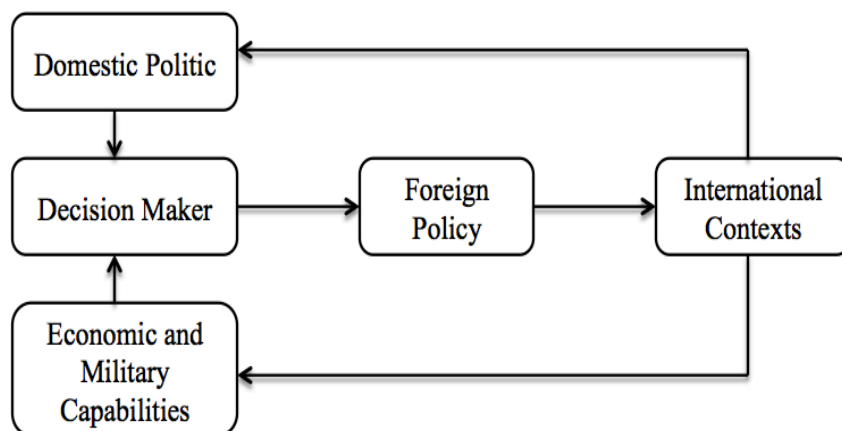
<sup>10</sup> *Atlantic Council*. (2014, February 11). Retrieved October 15, 2015, from Atlantic Council - US-Cuba: A New Public Survey Supports Policy Change: <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/publications/2014cubapoll/US- CubaPoll.pdf>

this conflict, to outline the background and factors that change continuously until today.

### 1. Foreign Policy Decision Making Process by William D. Coplin

By seeing the background and research question, the theoretical framework for this research is foreign policy decision making. The decision that is made in the foreign policy of a state is usually an action or strategy to achieve their national interest. There are several factors that influence the decision-making. The actors or the decision makers can also be one of the factors that affect the foreign policy decision-making process. According to William D. Coplin as described in the chart below, Domestic Politic, Economy-Military capabilities, and International context can influence the foreign policy of a state.

Figure 1.1. Foreign Policy Decision Making Process by William D. Coplin<sup>11</sup>



<sup>11</sup> Coplin, William D. *Pengantar Politik Internasional - Suatu Telaah Teoritis*. 2. Translated by Mercedes Marbun. Bandung: Penerbit Sinar Baru Algensindo, 2003. p. 30.

Based on the theory, the chart can be described as follow:

a. Domestic Politics

According to William D. Coplin, domestic politics will have a great impact on the formulation of the foreign policy of a state. The relationship between the decision makers of foreign policy with the domestic political actors (policy influencers) that will influence their foreign policy is called politics influence system.<sup>12</sup> Decision makers will need policy influencers as a source of support for their regimes because policy influencers have the power to give or withhold their support for the decision makers.

The influence of policy influencers or the role of domestic politics in composing foreign policy can be seen in distinguishing four types of policy influencers according to William D. Coplin<sup>13</sup>: Bureaucratic influencers, Partisan influencers, interest influencers, and Mass influencer. Several of them are related in term of the normalization policy between the US and Cuba that was finally taken in the last years 2014.

Bureaucratic influencers are very influential in decision-making because they typically affect the information on the stage of formulation and administrative assistance on the stage of implementation.<sup>14</sup> In relation to the normalization between the US and Cuba through some bureaucratic

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<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, p.74.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, p.81.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*, p.82.



department like the U.S. Departments of State, they support and also notify. Congress about the change of the US interests in Havana resulted in an agreement to re-establish diplomatic relations.<sup>15</sup>

Partisan influencers according to William D. Coplin are aiming to connect the demands of society to decision makers. The decision maker needs a support of partisan influencers to support their regimes.<sup>16</sup> In relation to the normalization between the US and Cuba, it is prevalent for the Democratic Party, where Obama comes from to support normalization. But today the percentage of Republic tends to increase in favor normalization than before.<sup>17</sup> Although earlier in the congress, the republic is not a visible support, but the president has substantial executive power in determining it.<sup>18</sup>

Interest influencer according to William D. Coplin is very influential in the foreign policy decision-making process with influence in the domestic politic process, although they do not determine the foreign policy of a state.<sup>19</sup> They have specific interest to be implemented in a state, through giving their opinion not only to the decision maker but also to bureaucratic and partisan influencer. In relation to the normalization

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<sup>15</sup> *U.S. Department of State*. (2015, July 6). Retrieved October 15, 2015, from U.S. Department of State - Re-Establishment of Diplomatic Relations With Cuba: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2015/07/244623.htm>

<sup>16</sup> Coplin, op. cit. p. 84

<sup>17</sup> *Atlantic Council*, loc. cit.

<sup>18</sup> *CBS News*. (2014, December 8). Retrieved November 20, 2015, from Can Congress block Obama's efforts to normalize Cuba relations?: <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/can-congress-block-obamas-efforts-to-normalize-cuba-relations/>

<sup>19</sup> Coplin, op. cit. p. 87.

between the US and Cuba, the lawmakers face pressure from the US companies that encourage them to end the trade bans to Cuba market like Caterpillar Inc.<sup>20</sup>

Mass influencers refer to the climate of public opinion. According to William, public opinion strengthens decisions made by policy makers, because public opinions are used to rationalize foreign policy actions.<sup>21</sup> So it does not mean that policymakers are controlled by public opinion or policy makers shape public opinion. In relation to the normalization between the US and Cuba, many media that hold a poll are showing the graphic support for a policy, for example the Gallup Poll that showed normalization polling data support from the American society.<sup>22</sup>

#### b. Economic and Military Capabilities

Decision-making and the formulation of foreign policy should consider the country's economic and military strength and weakness.<sup>23</sup> It is because the international position of a country is strongly influenced by its internal political and economic capabilities. In economic capabilities, a state should measure their state economic through service and production

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<sup>20</sup> *The Wall Street Journal*. (2015, July 20). Retrieved October 22, 2015, from The Wall Street Journal - As Embassies Open, a Further Thaw in Cuban-U. S. ties Faces Hurdles in Congress: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/as-embassies-open-a-further-cuban-thaw-faces-hurdles-in-congress-1437352444>

<sup>21</sup> Coplin, op. cit. p. 88.

<sup>22</sup> *GALLUP*. (2014, December 18). Retrieved April 19, 2015, from GALLUP - Americans on Cuba: For Normalized Relations, but Party Divide Exists : <http://www.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/180239/americans-cuba-normalized-relations-party-divide-exists.aspx>

<sup>23</sup> Coplin, op. cit. p. 110.

that are produced within the countries and the interdependent level of state in international trade. In military capability, a state should consider the capacity use of the military power and interdependent level of the foreign military sources.

The economic condition, especially in the early Obama administration is not stable or under recession.<sup>24</sup> This is an early depiction of the decreasing United States economy. It is caused by several factors like war expenditure in Bush era and military expenditure. To save economic growth, the US needs to cut the defense budget and allocate it in the economic side following with another diplomacy, engagement. In relation to the normalization between the US and Cuba, the US does engagement toward Cuba. Through non-military approach, it will minimize military expenditure and threat especially in Latin America.

### c. International Context

International context is also one of the factors that influence the foreign policy decision making of a country. According to William, there are three elements that should be analyzed to know the motive behind the decision-making: geographical, economic, and military factors.<sup>25</sup> All of them are related to their national interest. In geography, a state should take their attention in the region where the position of state and its relation

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<sup>24</sup> Crotty, James. The great austerity war: what caused the US deficit crisis and who should pay to fix it?. *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 2012: 79–104 .

<sup>25</sup> Coplin, op. cit. p. 167.

toward other state should be considered to choose decision in order to achieve national interest. In economy and political factors, a state should also consider the economic and political relation with other states.

In relation to the normalization between the US and Cuba, the US sees the recent development in the Caribbean and Latin America. In Obama administration, the normalizing relations between US and Cuba will give a chance for US to get closer to Latin America which the US has 'ignored' more than one decade. This condition will open the large economic partnership in the US and Latin American countries. It is relevant to Obama's policy that is more multilateral in making relation through "engagement" that is brought by Obama since Democratic Party campaign in 2008.

## **2. National Interest**

The concept of national interest is the basis for explaining the behavior of a state.<sup>26</sup> The ability of a state to achieve the national interest is very dependent on its national power. According to Jack C. Plano and Roy Olton, in making foreign policy, a national interest can have priority on self-preservation, independence, territorial integrity, military security and economic well being.<sup>27</sup> In addition, foreign policy is also made to expand its influence on other countries. According to Jack C. Plano and

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<sup>26</sup> Mochtar Masoed, *Ilmu Hubungan Internasional: Disiplin dan Metodologi*, PT. Pustaka Sinar Harapan, Jakarta, 1994, hal 139

<sup>27</sup> Jack C. Plano and Roy Olton. *The International Relations Dictionary*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., Western Michigan University: New York, 1969

Roy Olton: *“Foreign policy is strategy of plan course of action develop by decision makers of a state...aimed at achieving specific goals”*.<sup>28</sup>

In taking decision, a state always has national interest to be achieved. In the case of normalization between the US and Cuba, there is national interest the US wants to achieve. National interest of the US is the reason for domestic politic support in normalization with Cuba. From the five national interest by Jack C. Plano and Roy Olton, economic interest (economic well-being) has a major role that leads the US to normalize its relations with Cuba. Nevertheless, all the factors, including the four determinants by Coplin, are interrelated and influence the US decisions in normalizing its relations with Cuba.

#### **E. Hypothesis**

Based on the theoretical frameworks, the hypothesis is proposed as follows: The US under Obama administration intends to normalize diplomatic relations with Cuba 2014-2015 is due to:

- First, the domestic politics of the US which consist of: bureaucratic influencers (the US department of State), partisan influencers (Democratic and Republic parties), Interest influencers (the US Companies) and mass influencers (American people) tend to be pros of normalization proven with the existence of the poll about the demand of normalizing relations between the US and Cuba.

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<sup>28</sup> *ibid*, p. 128

- Second, economic and military capabilities of the US will increase because the normalization will open the opportunity to increase economy through free trade between both of the states. In military side, the US also no longer sees Cuba as one of their main threats, so that the US can focus more on their military defense.
- Third, in International context, the US's perspective on the recent development of the regional situation of Caribbean and Latin America is relevant to Obama's policy that is more multilateralism and diplomacy approach.

#### **F. Scope of Research**

To simplify the research process, the research is more inclined to look from the perspective of the US and emphasize the factors that encourage the US intention to normalize diplomatic relations with Cuba. The time interval of this research will include the relationship between the US and Cuba since 2005 up to 2015. However, it is possible for me to use the data and facts before 2005 to strengthen the analysis.

#### **G. Methodology**

##### **1. Method of Research**

This research would analyze the secondary data and statistical data that are relevant to the purpose of my studies, which I have selected during library research.

## 2. Method of collecting data

This research would be completed with two kinds of relevant data and/ or information. First, the official statement by Obama as president of the US, about the United States of America's changing relationship with the people of Cuba. Second, background and statistical data were collected mainly from the online journal as the main resource. In addition, other literature such as books, news media, reports from international agencies, and electronic sources were used. The data would be analyzed, interpreted, and framed into the scope of the important point in order to draw conclusions.

## 3. Conceptualization

In this paper, I use some particular terms such as *Obama*, *The US Policy*, *Cuba*, *The US and Cuba relation*, and *the normalization of diplomatic ties*.

## **H. Purpose of Research**

This research aims to identify and understand the reality and the factors behind the US intention to normalize the diplomatic relations with Cuba after the long stagnant situation, 54 years of diplomatic disengagement.

## **I. Organization of Writing**

The system of writing of this research is arranged as follows:

Chapter 1. This chapter contains an explanation about Significance, Background, Research Question, Theoretical Framework, Hypothesis, Scope of Method, Methodology, Purpose of Research, and Organization of Writing.

Chapter 2. This chapter describes the pattern of the US foreign policy. Then, it is followed by showing the US embargo and diplomatic disengagement policy to Cuba in 1961.

Chapter 3. This chapter describes the fluctuations of the US and Cuba relations at the beginning. Then, it is followed by an explanation that the US Policy and Cuba relation is in stagnant condition since President Johnson until George W. Bush.

Chapter 4. This chapter analyzes the factors behind the US taking a decision to normalize relations toward Cuba. The analysis includes the domestic politics, the economic and military capabilities, the international context, and also decision maker.

Chapter 5. Conclusion