

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

COVID-19 or also known as CoronaVirus Disease 2019 is a new virus that was discovered in December 2019 in Wuhan, Guangzhou, China. The virus affects more than 30 million people in more than 230 countries in the worldwide, causing more than 1 million deaths. The World Health Organization (WHO) has assigned the spread of this virus as a global pandemic. This virus attacks the human respiratory system. Fever, weakness and dry cough are the most common symptoms of COVID-19. Aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, or sore throat may appear in some patients. Usually, these symptoms are mild and begin gradually (World Health Organization, 2020).

The Coronavirus pandemic has become one of the major disasters and crises that have occurred in the history of human civilization. According to the World Health Organization, a disaster is an event that disrupts normal living conditions and causes a level of suffering that exceeds the adaptability of the affected population (World Health Organization, 2002). This epidemic brought a lot of losses to countries, both socially and economically, almost all over the world. Apart from that, the image of a country is also at stake in this pandemic situation.

The spread of this virus can be said to be very fast through social activities and interactions because this virus is transmitted from human to human. The scale of the spread of the virus becomes widespread as the number of people who enter and leave a country easily.

This is what happened in South Korea, which was once the country with the highest number of cases outside China even though it was overtaken by the US. As of 4 November 2020, there have been 9,193,765 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 229,948 deaths in the US (World Health Organization, 2020).

South Korea announced its first case on January 20, 2020. According to Our World Data, as of October 31, 2020, there were 26,511 recorded cases of COVID-19 in South Korea (Our World Data, 2020). The following data is a curve of confirmed cases for the last 10 months in South Korea.

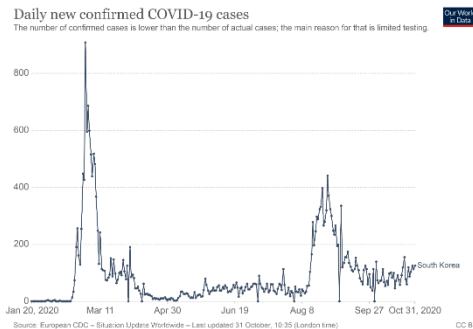


Image 1. 1Daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases

Based on the above case curve, South Korea managed to handle the spread of the virus in a short period of time. This is evidenced by the decline in the case curve in April after experiencing a significant increase in cases in March. In the following months cases continued to occur but the death rate in South Korea due to COVID-19 was low with the death toll of 464 cases out of 26,511 confirmed cases. It can be seen in the curve below how the comparison of the number

of confirmed cases and the number of cases died. It can be concluded that South Korea's handling of the COVID-19 case is the best with a large number of cured cases.

The spread of the COVID-19 virus in South Korea is very fast because the virus spreads along with the

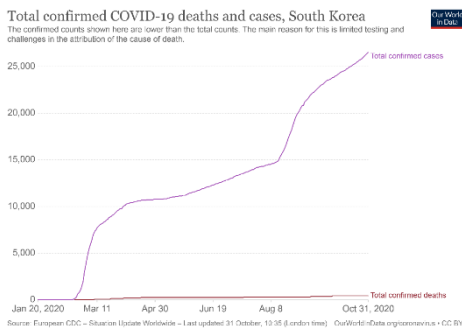


Image 1. 2 Total confirmed COVID-19 death and cases, South Korea

migration activities of people, considering that this virus spreads from person to person. South Korean tourist destinations, which attract a lot of foreign tourists, cause a lot of activity in and out of this country. According to statistical data from the Korea Tourism Organization, in August 2020 there were 68,797 visitors who came and 88,888 people who left South Korea (Korea Tourism Organization, 2020).

This global pandemic cannot be separated from the role of the government in handling this case seriously. The global spread of the virus has led some countries to take bold action. Some countries implement a lockdown system where people are not allowed to enter or leave buildings or areas freely until

a specified time, this is done in an effort to stop the spread of the virus. Some of the regulations that were imposed during the lockdown period included cutting off transportation routes to and from the quarantine city and closing many public places (Sebayang, 2020).

South Korea managed to contain and suppress the spread of the virus quickly without a Lockdown policy. No cessation of international activities, entry and exit of the country is still permitted. The country's success in overcoming the spread of this virus cannot be separated from the responsiveness and seriousness of the government since the beginning of the spread of the virus.

South Korea has its own strategy in suppressing the spread of COVID-19 more effectively and efficiently without imposing a lockdown system in its country. South Korea has a method called 3T or Trace, Test and Treat which has proven to be more effective in suppressing the spread of the COVID-19 outbreak. Large-scale tests are confirmed to be successful with the existence of accurate medical devices, South Korea has several medical companies that can produce COVID-19 test kits and other medical equipment. A week after the first report of a Coronavirus case in South Korea, the country's government immediately met with representatives of a number of medical companies to make a large-scale COVID-19 test kit (Kumparan, 2020). This proves the seriousness of the South Korean government in dealing with this outbreak quickly.

They carried out tests on their citizens on a large scale and in various ways which eventually became a

pioneer for other countries. They tested it in a way called *drive-through testing facilities*. With this, people can do the test without having to physically meet other people because the test is done without having to get out of the car. In this way, South Korea can diagnose a large number of people in a short amount of time. Having more people tested can slow the spread of the virus, because the more people who are tested the sooner they find infected people so they won't spread the virus more widely and the situation can be controlled.

With its success in dealing with COVID-19, many other countries have asked South Korea for assistance, in the form of humanitarian assistance, test kits and other medical devices. More than 120 countries have requested assistance from Coronavirus testing kits to South Korea (Shin & Kauranen, 2020). Even the President of the United States, Donald Trump, has also asked South Korea to supply medical devices to the US. With many requests from various countries regarding assistance in providing COVID-19 test kits from them, South Korea finally prioritized export assistance to 3 countries, namely Indonesia, the United States, and the United Arab Emirates.

In addition, South Korea also distributed aid to other countries and regions such as Africa. The South Korean government donated two million face masks to the African Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC Africa) to help deal with COVID-19. South Korea has distributed various aid worth 9 million USD (equivalent to Rp131 billion) to the African CDC. The assistance was in the form of masks and COVID-19 test kits (Haryono, 2020).

Its assistance continues to the Southeast Asia region, ASEAN. South Korea launched an aid program worth a total of 5 million USD for ten ASEAN member countries related to the handling of COVID-19 (Antaranews, 2020). This is related to the commitment of South Korean President Moon Jae In for his cooperation in supporting ASEAN, especially related to quarantine and the supply of medical devices.

Regardless of the amount of assistance that South Korea has provided to these countries, South Korea is experiencing an economic recession. A recession is a condition in which a country's economy experiences a significant decline that lasts for months in a year. A country can be said to be a recession if its economic conditions decline sharply for two consecutive quarters. On 23 July 2020, the Bank of Korea announced that the country's gross domestic product fell by 3.3% in the April to June period from the previous quarter, when contracted 1.3% (Jaewon, 2020).

The country with the fourth largest economy in Asia is following Japan, Thailand and Singapore which have experienced recession. Export activities that support 40% of the South Korean economy plummeted, down 16.6 percent, this is the worst since 1963 (Kim & Roh, 2020). This happened after the global COVID-19 pandemic which caused economic and business activities in many countries to become paralyzed. Many countries are facing this global pandemic by implementing social distancing policies and lockdown, this has caused business and economic activity to slow down and even stop altogether. By decreasing the economic activity of a country, it will

affect the economy of other countries. Like South Korea, the demand for imports from South Korea has decreased significantly because this outbreak has limited or even stopped socio-economic activities in various countries.

Even though South Korea's situation is experiencing a recession, international assistance to other countries related to COVID-19 remains active and continues. This is what makes the writer interested in writing and analyzing South Korea, which in its downturn has actually helped other countries.

B. Research Question

Based on the background that has been explained above, then the problem statement can be drawn: “why does South Korea provide international assistance to Indonesia despite the economic recession? “

C. Theoretical Framework

To study and examine the problem of why does South Korea give so much help even though it has an impact on the recession, a theory is needed to study and answer the problem. On this occasion the author will use foreign aid concept and national branding concept.

1. Foreign Aid Concept

Foreign aid is a form of assistance from a country or international organization to another country in the form of an economic, military, or humanitarian emergency. These assistance aims to foster the development of the recipient country. States also provide assistance to alleviate suffering caused by

natural or man-made disasters such as famine, disease and war, to promote economic development, help establish or strengthen political institutions, and to overcome various transnational problems including disease, terrorism or other crimes and environmental destruction (Williams, 1998).

However, foreign aid can also be used by donor countries for their own interests. Foreign aid can be used to achieve a country's diplomatic goals, enable it to gain diplomatic recognition, to gain support for positions in international organizations, or to increase its diplomatic access to foreign officials (Williams, 1998). According to Leonard M. Dudley dan Claude Montmarquette, ada tiga motif donor memainkan peran utama dalam pengambilan keputusan yang melibatkan bantuan luar negeri: expectations of gratitude, berupa dukungan untuk kepentingan donor; kemajuan kepentingan ekonomi donor, melalui sarana perdagangan yang lebih banyak; dan motif altruistik, keinginan untuk meningkatkan taraf hidup di negara penerima (Claude, 1976).

Based on this theory, foreign aid has its own motive, in addition to helping the recipient country as well as for the benefit of the donor country itself. This is one of the reasons a country provides assistance to other countries because this will strengthen relations between the two countries, giving rise to new cooperation and agreements. In the global pandemic situation caused by COVID-19, many countries are experiencing difficulties in dealing with the spread of the virus in their countries so they need help from other countries. Unlike other countries, South Korea managed to deal with the spread of the virus in its country in a short time. This makes South Korea a

model for many countries in handling COVID-19 cases.

With its success in addressing the spread of the virus in its country, South Korea has finally provided a lot of assistance to various countries in Asia, America, and even Europe. This aims to help these countries to get through the crisis in dealing with the pandemic that spreads the virus in their countries. From the amount of assistance provided, South Korea has prioritized several countries to receive its assistance, one of which is Indonesia. With this help, the relationship between the two countries is getting closer, as evidenced by the presence of new cooperation between the two countries, one of which is cooperation in handling COVID-19.

2. National Branding Concept

National branding is a study related to the development of an image or reputation of a country at the international level which includes economy, politics, culture. National branding is the two words "*national*" and "*branding*". In each of the definitions, *national* is a community or group living in an area so that it creates similarities in language, customs and culture. According to Joseph Stalin, a nation is a historically established and stable community of people, formed on the basis of the same language, region, economic life, and psychological structure that is embodied in the same culture (Stalin, 1993). With the existence of a nation, a "state" will emerge as an area, land, or territory with a government in it. While *branding* comes from the word "*brand*", which is an identity that distinguishes it from others. This identity can be a logo, name, term, or sign. Meanwhile,

branding is a communication activity, strengthening, maintaining a *brand* in order to provide perspective to others who see it (Utami, 2020).

National branding is an effort of a country to improve the reputation or image of its country at the international level in order to gain benefits both in economic, political or other purposes. It is important for a country to have a good reputation, especially at the international level, because a country's reputation affects relations with the international world. By having a good reputation, a country will get the trust of other countries to cooperate. The formation of a nation's image (national branding), both internally and externally, is based on positive values and perceptions, so that it gets a position among other countries in the world (Prasetia, 2015). According to Szondi, the concept of national branding is a strategy for a country to present itself with the aim of creating a good reputation through economic, political and social interests at home and abroad (Szondi, 2008).

In line with the concept of national branding, a country builds a good reputation at the international level by using political, economic and social interests. Through international assistance, South Korea also enhances the reputation and image of its country at the international level. With a good reputation in the eyes of the world, it will generate a sense of trust from other countries, with this trust will have a positive impact on South Korea.

With the concept of foreign aid and national branding, this will later help the author in analyzing the problem of why South Korea provided international

assistance in the COVID-19 case even when this country experienced an economic recession.

D. Hypothesis

Based on the background and the use of foreign aid concept which states that a country providing an international assistance was to help the recipient country and also for its own benefit and the use of national branding concept which states that the image and reputation of a country can affect the country's relations with the international community, the author suggest the hypothesis from the problem The reason why South Korea chose to provide International assistance to Indonesia when it was recession as:

1. South Korea wanted to maintain bilateral relations with Indonesia. Providing international assistance to other countries will strengthen South Korea's bilateral relations with these countries. With this, it will benefit South Korea because by establishing closer relations it can resulting in broader cooperation or even create cooperation in new sectors.

2. International assistance is one of South Korea's efforts to improve its national image as a "friendly country" at the international level. The international assistance provided will foster respect from the countries it helps, hereby South Korea indirectly undertakes national branding to enhance its national image and reputation.

E. Research Methodology

The research method used in this research is the library research method and qualitative research

methods to find data about the forms of South Korean assistance in COVID-19.

For data collection methods, the author uses qualitative research methods. Qualitative data is a type of data that describes information non-numerically. According to Sugiyono qualitative data is data in the form of a sentence, word or image (Sugiyono, 2015). This type of data can be obtained orally or in writing through interviews, observations, or from written documents. The author uses this method to collect data on how South Korea's bilateral relations with the countries that have been assisted. However, there are some data that are presented in numerical form such as charts regarding the number of cases and the number of deaths due to COVID-19 in South Korea.

For data sources, the author uses library research techniques, the method of collecting data and information in the form of books, notes, or reports from previous studies. The data and information are obtained by using secondary data from books, journals, articles, and other reliable sources. The author uses this literature to find various news, information, theories, data, and so on regarding foreign aid and national branding.

This research was conducted to find out the reasons behind South Korea's foreign aid in dealing with COVID-19 with the scope of research in 2020, from the beginning of the occurrence of COVID-19 in South Korea. Started from South Korea which was once become a country with the highest number of COVID-19 case outside China, continue with its success in dealing with the pandemic, then up to the foreign aid provided to other countries even though

South Korea itself had experienced an economic recession.

F. Scope of Research

This research focuses on the reasons behind South Korea's international assistance regarding COVID-19, also the forms of assistance and the advantages they got from Indonesia. The scope of the research was drawn during the 2020 pandemic from the first Coronavirus hits South Korea.

G. Writing System

To make the analysis understandable, in this thesis the writer gives an analysis in a systematic sequence that is divided into 4 chapters with sub-chapters in it. These are as follows:

1. Chapter I

This chapter is an introduction to this research paper which contains the background of the topics to be analyzed in this research paper, then there is research question, theoretical framework as a tool of analysis, hypothesis in the form of temporary guesswork of research problems, research methods, and writing systems.

2. Chapter II

This chapter will discuss how COVID-19 entered South Korea, how the process was and how South Korea handled the outbreak, as well as its impact on the South Korean economy.

3. Chapter III

In this section, we will discuss the analysis of the bilateral relations between South Korea and the country it is assisting with the case study of Indonesia, besides that, it will also discuss the types of assistance

from South Korea in COVID-19 and also the benefits of this assistance.

4. Chapter IV

This chapter will discuss the national branding efforts undertaken by South Korea through the international assistance it provides.

5. Chapter V

This last chapter of research paper consists of conclusions from all discussions and research, all summaries of chapters and also answers to research questions.