

Regional Response As Indonesia's Coordination Effort To Maritime Violence In The Malacca Strait

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Abstract – As a maritime nation, Indonesia considers maritime governance important in all maritime areas. This includes not only vessels sailing in Indonesian territorial waters and routes in Indonesian waters, but also Indonesian-flagged vessels sailing abroad and Indonesian crew sailing abroad. The Strait of Malacca is one of the most dangerous sea lanes in the world and a target for transnational crime. Located between the coastal states of Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, to the north of the Indonesian island of Sumatra and to the south of Malaysia, the Malacca Strait is 600 miles long and is a major transit corridor connecting the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea. In the maritime violence ecosystem, there are types of maritime crimes consisting of maritime terrorism, maritime armed crime, and other maritime crimes. Cooperation to combat maritime violence in the Malacca Strait can take the form of cooperation between states, cooperation between NGOs, or cooperation between security sector actors, such as border guards and police, with a focus on prevention and protection. There are several coordinated patrols between Indonesia and other countries to combat maritime violence in the Malacca Strait. For example, bilateral cooperation between Malacca Strait littoral states and user states, to establishing a cooperation framework between Indonesia and the International Maritime Organization that focuses on the issue of maritime threats.

Keywords – Malacca Strait, Maritime Violence, Indonesia, Coordination

I. INTRODUCTION

The Strait of Malacca is a trade route that plays a very important and vital role not only for neighboring countries in Southeast Asia, but also for the entire Asia Pacific region. The Malacca Strait is the second busiest maritime trade route in the world after the Strait of Hormuz in the Middle East. However, as the flow of sea-borne trade increases, so do maritime security threats, which seems to have the countries that rely heavily on the Malacca Strait fearful. In this case, if the waterway turns out to have very high economic value and potential, it will also become a target for maritime security threats and violence (Suproboningrum & Kurniawan, 2018).

The threats faced in the Malacca Strait are of course multidimensional, multifactorial and involve many actors. Domestically, maritime hazards often lead to conflicts among neighboring countries. Externally, they are also under pressure from foreign powers vying for their respective interests in the Malacca Strait (Sagena, 2019).

As a maritime nation, Indonesia considers maritime governance important in all maritime areas. Not only vessels navigating territorial waters and routes in Indonesian waters, but also Indonesian-flagged vessels navigating abroad and Indonesian crew sailing abroad (Arifin *et al.*, 2018).

The role of the maritime sector is crucial, as around 80% of world trade is conducted by sea, including in Southeast Asian waters. The Malacca Strait is one of the most dangerous sea lanes in the world and a target for transnational crime. The Malacca Strait lies between the coastal countries of Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, north of the Indonesian island of Sumatra and south of Malaysia. The strait is 600 miles long and is an important transit corridor connecting the Indian Ocean and the South

China Sea. With a length of about 800 km, a width of 50-320 km, and a minimum depth of 32 meters, the Strait of Malacca is the longest strait in the world used for international shipping. Current estimates are that between 150 and 500 ships (large freighters and tankers, excluding local traffic) pass through the Strait of Malacca every day, equivalent to about 50,000 ships per year (Suproboningrum & Kurniawan, 2018).

II. RESEARCH METHODS

The writing approach is structured using qualitative methods with literature reviews from various sources such as scientific journals, books and articles related to the topic of study in accordance with the discussion raised. In this case, qualitative research departs from an approach that is composed of a theoretical framework, experts' ideas, and researchers' understanding in the form of written empirical data support. Sugiyono (2013) argues that qualitative methods focus on research on natural object conditions by using combined data collection techniques (triangulation) and research results that emphasize meaning rather than generalization.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Cooperation among stakeholders is considered essential to combat violence at sea. Cooperation to combat maritime violence in the Malacca Strait focuses on prevention and protection and can take the form of cooperation between states, cooperation between NGOs, and cooperation between security actors such as border guards and police. . For the Malacca Strait itself, Indonesia actively cooperates with various actors, in this case with two coastal states, namely Malaysia and Singapore. In addition, Indonesia also cooperates with user countries such as the United States. Indonesia expands cooperation not only between countries but also with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in the field of security (Suproboningrum & Kurniawan, 2018).

3.1 Coordinated patrols in the Malacca Strait

In June 2004, Indonesia proposed MALSINDO trilateral coordination patrols in the Strait of Malacca, to which Malaysia and Singapore agreed. A month later, the patrol was launched and in September 2005, the Eyes in the Sky initiative was launched. The following year, in April 2006, MALSINDO became the Malacca Strait Patrol and the three countries agreed to establish a Joint Coordination Committee that would meet twice a year. In addition, Malaysia's representative, Najib Razak, in a meeting with Indonesia in 2005, was asked to demonstrate to the international community that the three countries bordering the Malacca Strait could secure the world's second busiest trade route and proposed to seek cooperation from other interested countries (Suproboningrum & Kurniawan, 2018).

Joint Patrol and Security Cooperation in the Malacca Strait has progressed with the approval of the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and Term of Reference of the Joint Coordinating Committee (TOR JCC) in the Malacca Strait. These include provisions on the right of the coastal state's navy to pursue sea violations in the territorial waters of the neighboring state for 5 nautical miles. It was agreed that the Malacca Strait Patrol (MSP) would consist of three elements, namely: Malacca Strait Sea Patrol (MSSP), Eyes in the Sky (EIS) and Intellegent Expert Group (IEG) that contribute to the continuation and further development of the Malacca Straits Patrol Information System in strengthening trilateral maritime coordination and situational awareness (Suproboningrum & Kurniawan, 2018).

The signing of the patrol cooperation is a form of firmness in realizing the commitment of the three countries to jointly ensure the security of the Malacca Strait. This means that the strait is not only a problem for the strait owners, but a common problem that must be resolved together (Sagena, 2019). The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for security cooperation between the three strait-owning countries (Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore) in the Malacca Strait was approved in Batam on April 21, 2006. It is a joint provision governing the conduct of security operations by the three countries in the Malacca Strait, combining sea and air patrols. It provides arrangements for bilateral border crossings between Singapore and Indonesia and between Malaysia and Indonesia.

3.2 Bilateral Cooperative between Litoral State and User State

Bilateral cooperation has been undertaken by coastal states and countries that use the Malacca Strait, such as the United States and Singapore. In addition, Malaysia and Indonesia are concerned about the form of the US-Singapore Strategic Framework Agreement as both believe that a strong US military presence in the region threatens the sovereignty of littoral states. However, both countries are willing to improve their military relations with the United States. In 2004 and 2005, Indonesia and the United States held the 2nd and 3rd Security Conferences, where the two countries exchanged views on various security and defense issues, including security in the Malacca Strait (Sagena, 2019).

In late 2005, the United States took the initiative to offer to help modernize the Indonesian military and provide technical assistance in support of joint security operations of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore in the Malacca Strait. Subsequently, the Indonesian government also submitted a request to the United States for technical assistance, including radars and sensors to secure the Malacca Strait, as well as increased patrol vessel capacity (Puspitasari, 2014).

During her visit to Indonesia in March 2006, US Secretary of State Condoreza Rice said that maritime security in Southeast Asia was a top priority and that the US would close the Malacca Strait to drug smugglers, maritime violence, pirates and arms smuggling. Indonesia received US\$1 million to improve security in the Malacca Strait, and in April 2006, it was reported that the United States provided Indonesia with an early warning system to help maintain maritime security in the Malacca Strait. The system was installed at several points along the Malacca Strait's territorial route and also on several maritime patrol aircraft. The United States also offered to exchange information with the three coastal states on various issues related to the situation and circumstances in the Malacca Strait (Puspitasari, 2014).

Maritime security in the Malacca Strait is one of the main issues discussed at the Asian Security Conference organized by the International Institute for Strategic Studies, known as the Shangri-La Dialogue. In June 2004, the 3rd Shangri-La Dialogue was held in Singapore, and the United States proposed the Regional Maritime Security Initiative (RMSI) and the idea of sending US troops to support patrols in the Malacca Strait. Subsequently, the US RMSI proposal and the possibility of foreign military involvement in security management in the Malacca Strait were further discussed at the 4th Shangri-La Dialogue in June 2005, where the Malacca Strait in particular became a widespread issue (Puspitasari, 2014).

A consensus was reached based on three key principles: coastal states should have primary responsibility for the safety of their regional waterways; user states and the international community play an important role; and new cooperation measures should be implemented in a manner that respects sovereignty and is consistent with international law. In June 2006, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore recognized the need for enhanced forms of maritime security cooperation in line with these principles (Yunda, 2020).

3.3 Cooperative Mechanism IMO

The framework of cooperation between Indonesia and the IMO is called the protection of vital shipping lanes. This cooperation framework was established with the aim of improving safety, security, and environmental protection. This cooperation was initiated by meetings between the Council and Secretary General of IMO with the coastal states of the Malacca Strait. These meetings included the Jakarta Meeting in 2005; the Kuala Lumpur Meeting in 2006; and the Singapore Meeting in 2007. The principles of the cooperation mechanism discussed at the three meetings above are:

1. User countries, the shipping industry and other stakeholders should endeavor to participate in the cooperation mechanism and contribute voluntarily.
2. interested countries should continue efforts to enhance maritime security in the Malacca Strait.
3. request IMO to continue to cooperate with coastal states in providing assistance for agreed projects, as well as contributing to the maintenance, repair and replacement of aids to navigation in the Malacca Strait (Yunda, 2020).

3.4 Cooperation between Security Sector Actors

Faced with the problem of maritime violence in the Malacca Strait, coastal states have strengthened cooperation through joint water patrols, where each country has the right to patrol and arrest people on vessels committing crimes and violence at sea. In June 2004, Malaysia and Indonesia agreed to improve security in the Malacca Strait by increasing sea patrols. Malaysia,

Indonesia and Singapore have conducted coordinated patrols in the Malacca Strait since 1992, with patrols conducted four times a year. A new patrol regime was announced on July 20, 2004, with 17 vessels assigned to patrol the coastal provinces and conduct patrols throughout the year. Each country will contribute seven vessels with about 100 crew members (Saeri, 2013).

At the time of the operation, 17 vessels were involved in the Malacca Strait, of which 7 were Indonesian vessels and 5 Malaysian and Singaporean vessels. To respect each country's sovereignty, each vessel did not enter the territory of the other country and only patrolled its own territory (Saeri, 2013). As part of this cooperation, three surveillance checkpoints will be established to enable the three countries to work together to intervene quickly on transnational crimes such as maritime violence. These three checkpoints are located in Changi, Singapore, as well as Batam in Indonesia and Malaysia (Yunda, 2020).

The figure below illustrates the coordination pattern among authorities in the Malacca Strait. In the event of maritime violence or other illegal activities in the Malacca Strait, national authorities coordinate, report and communicate information among other authorities and take necessary actions. The watchdogs in Indonesian waters in this case are BAKAAMLA, Tentara Laut Dirajah Malaysia (TLDM) in Malaysia and the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) in Singapore (Saeri, 2013).



Fig 1. Example of patrol coordination between Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore

Indonesia and Malaysia also conduct joint patrols in the Malacca Strait as part of the previously agreed MALINDO program. In addition, in November 2005, Malaysia and Singapore also held a joint exercise called Ex Malapura in the Malacca Strait. This joint exercise was held to enhance regional security from maritime security threats. This was the 17th joint exercise between the two navies. In April 2006, Malaysia and Indonesia also conducted another joint air exercise, codenamed Elang Malindo XXIJ (Saeri, 2013).

In addition, in May 2005, the Indonesian and Singaporean Navies launched the SURPIC (Surface Picture) marine surveillance system project. This cooperation will enable both navies to monitor high-traffic waterways with an improved system, allowing the Indonesian Navy and the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) to share information and deploy patrol vessels effectively in the region. The SURPIC project is an important step towards improving navigation safety in the Malacca Strait. It will strengthen the already close working relationship between Indonesia and Singapore, which is under the supervision of the Coordination Patrol, and strengthen cooperation in combating cross-border crime

3.5 Institutionalizing Better Implementation, Networking, and Evaluation

Finally, a permissive strategy is key to combating violence at sea. In this case, countries have established institutions that can break down various threats and obstacles regarding maritime violence in the Malacca Strait. However, in combating maritime violence in the Malacca Strait, Indonesia still does not have its own institution to monitor the government's performance in combating maritime violence in the Malacca Strait. The Information Fusion Center (IFC), a multinational coast guard intelligence center, was established on 27 April 2009 in Changi, Singapore. It is represented by the International Liaison Officer and the Singapore Navy Integrated Team. The International Liaison Officer (ILO) and the integrated team work well together to promote and facilitate maritime information and mutual understanding. IFC partners are Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, China, Chile, France, Greece, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, United States and Vietnam.

The Information Fusion Center (IFC) seeks to enhance the collective understanding of the maritime domain in ensuring shipping security in the Singapore Straits region and beyond. Since its launch in April 2009, the IFC has been at the forefront of information sharing with navies, coast guards, and other regional and national maritime authorities to counter maritime security threats and incidents (Yunda, 2020).

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The Strait of Malacca is the busiest trade route in the world, known as the main route for goods and human traffic between regions, which is the main link between Europe, the Middle East and South Asia, as well as Southeast Asia and East Asia. The Malacca Strait is the shortest east-west sea route compared to other waterways. Thus, the Malacca Strait has become a strategic trade route for the world in exporting and importing goods through waterways.

Behind the strategic value of the Malacca Strait, there are threats and security disturbances in the maritime domain that occur in the Malacca Strait, which is the biggest problem in the Malacca Strait. So Indonesia's efforts to respond regionally to threats and maritime violence by organizing various collaborations are considered very important to be carried out between the actors of countering maritime violence. Cooperation in countering maritime violence in the Malacca Strait can be seen from cooperation between countries, cooperation between NGOs, or cooperation between security sector actors that focus on prevention and protection such as border guards, police, etc.

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