The Securitization of Extremism Threats in the Indonesian Government

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Abstract. This paper aims to analyze the discursive and non-discursive practices of Indonesian Government to justify their extraordinary acts in curbing extremism/radicalism. This article focuses on how state actor and their agencies convey speech act as securitizing move to posit extremism/radicalism as an existential threat towards state legitimacy and ideology. The findings indicate that state agencies frame the notion of extremism/radicalism and lead discourses to transform non-security issues of extremism to become security issues and legitimize extraordinary measures in restrictive regulations. The government mobilizes audience following consent from the critical mass persuaded by discursive practices. The outlawing of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), Jamaah Ansharud Daulah (JAD), and enacting Anti-Terrorism Law and Presidential Decree has been produced to exercise state power. This research is a descriptive- analytical research and data are collected through library research and interviews.

Keywords: Extremism, Securitization, Speech Act, Indonesia.

1. Introduction

Indonesia is one of the countries affected by global policies, both in the counterterrorism and development policies. This country has a unique position because it portrays itself as a global leader of "moderate Muslim countries" at the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) as stated by President Jokowi at the World Muslim Scholar Conference [1;2]. In Indonesia, the issues of extremism, radicalism, and terrorism are controversial issues which have delayed the revision of the Terrorism Law due to the difficulty of reaching consensus. Concerns that the Terrorism Law "has the potential to violate human rights", "repressing civil rights", and "misused to silence the opposition" are the causes of delays in the ratification of the draft Terrorism Law[3].

What makes the issue of dealing with counter-terrorism and violent extremism a sensitive issue is its association with Islam, something that has now become a harsh criticism of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) practices and policies. In Indonesia, among the narratives that have emerged regarding counter-terrorism and violent extremism policies is that the Indonesian Government under the Jokowi Regime is 'an anti-Islam government'. This narrative has continued to emerge since the polarization of supporters of presidential candidates which occurred in the 2014 presidential election to the 2019 presidential election. Jokowi's non-voters increasingly accused the President of being 'anti-Islam' when he disbanded Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) [4] and Front Pembela Islam (FPI) in 2020. This accusation seemed to meet justification when in 2015 the Public Relations of the official government body, the National

Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT), associated radicalism with Islam [5]. This is where the terms Islamist radicalism or Islamist extremism emerged.

Associating Islam with radicalism can actually be seen as an attempt by the Indonesian Government under President Jokowi to shift the discourse on terrorism in Indonesia. Situating radical Islam as a threat to the existence of Indonesia and its basic values (Pancasila and the Republic of Indonesia) is an effort to securitize extremism or radicalism which actually gives rise to a shift in discourse regarding existential threats. In general, from the three dimensions of countering terrorism; preemptive/preventive, repressive, and rehabilitative/integrative (or prevention-action-recovery), the term "terrorism" is closer to acts of violence that cause terror. Thus, the securitization of radicalism or defining extremism as a threat—in the 2015 BNPT definition which linked radicalism to ISIS and jihad—not only further blurs the boundaries of the definition of "radicalism" with "violent extremism", but also marks an expansion of the definition of extremism from simply formal group or movement to attitudes and mindset. There was a resemblance to the 2005 analysis of extremism policies in the UK, US and the Netherlands which shifted the reference to extremism from formal groups or movements to attitudes, thought patterns and dispositions.

The term "violent extremism" was adopted in 2006 by British and US policymakers who shifted their attention to floating Islamist ideology that circulated not through organizational recruitment but through a process of radicalization targeting young people [6]. [5] States that the boundary between radicalism and extremism is violence: if radicalism has four indicators (literalist, intolerant, anti-system and revolutionary), extremism is characterized by these four plus a fifth indicator: violence. The term "violent extremism", referring to this definition, can be called pleonasm. In general discourse, extremism is synonymous with radicalism. So, radicalism/extremism that uses violence is labeled as "violent extremism". However, in the Indonesian context, attributing the attitude of wanting rapid change to violence in the name of religion not only blurs the definitions of radicalism, extremism and terrorism, but is also part of efforts to securitize radicalism.

In the context of the securitization of extremism, this research has several important academic values and policy relevance. First, by examining the securitization of extremism, this research provides information about the discursive and non-discursive practices of the Indonesian Government. Second, this research is important to understand and explain discrimination against Islam and its adherents due to the "Islamization of extremism". Third, this research seeks to contribute to ensuring that P/CVE policies in Indonesia can be more balanced and non-discriminatory by respecting the diversity, independence of civil society, the public and the private sector.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Securitization of Terrorism and Extremism

It is urgent to research the securitization of radicalism or extremism, because the previous works on securitization in Indonesia have emphasized the focus on the securitization of terrorism, especially during the era of President Megawati [7;8]. Another article that discusses the securitization of terrorism and human rights in

Indonesia [9]. This paper attempts to bridge positivistic conventional ST with second generation ST which adds the involvement of civil society and human rights norms consideration. Nevertheless, the securitization of extremism under the Jokowi government is underexplored and remains a turning point in critical studies of CVE practices and policies that have been globalized to Indonesia.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Securitization Theory

Introduced in 1995 by Ole Waever, Securitization Theory (ST) was then further developed by the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute (COPRI). The Copenhagen School increasingly gained popularity after Barry Buzan and Jaap De Wilde joined. The three of them then published an important book from this school of thought, *Security: A New Framework of Analysis* (Buzan et al., 1998). For the Copenhagen School, securitization is:

> "A successful speech act through which an intersubjective understanding is constructed within a political community to treat something as an existential threat to a valued referent object, and to enable a call for urgent and exceptional measures to deal with the threat" [10]

Securitization is also interpreted as a process when securitization actors define an issue or actor as an 'existential threat' to a certain referent object and this effort is accepted by the relevant audience[11]. The process of identifying and mitigating a threat from becoming an extraordinary threat and giving rise to an emergency situation will ultimately lead to the presence of extraordinary measures.

Securitization theory presents a framework for security studies that conceptualizes security as something more specific than just matters related to threats and vulnerabilities [12]. This theory argues that security is not always an objective practice, but a constructive one. For this reason, this theory uses a constructivist approach in defining a security issue. So an issue can be considered a security issue if it "is presented as giving rise to an existential threat to a particular referent object"[13]. The task of securitization is to move an issue along a spectrum that ranges from non-politicized, politicized, to securitized one.

In order to successfully frame an issue into a security issue, there are stages and arenas that must be carried out by enunciators/communicators or securitization actors. It requires a double dimension: discursive (speech acts and shared understanding) and non-discursive (implementation of policies and actions)[14]. For this reason, there are four main concepts in the context of this theory, namely, (1) existential threat, (2) referent object, (3) emergency situation, (4) extraordinary action (Kurniawan, 2017). An existential threat is the emergence of a dominant issue which, because it is different from other issues, must receive absolute priority. It is "a situation of maximum danger that potentially requires great effort and unlimited sacrifice"[15]. Meanwhile, reference objects are things that are considered existentially threatened and have a legitimate claim to be included in the survival category [13]. Included in the reference objects are

(1) the state, within the framework of military security, (2) sovereignty or ideology, within the framework of political security, (3) national economy, within the framework of economic security, (4) collective identity, within the framework of social security, and (5) species or habitat, within an environmental security framework [16].

After a call for a security threat, the next step is to declare an emergency situation. By declaring that a condition is an emergency, a state usually claims "the right to use whatever means necessary to halt the development of the threat" which in this case requires 'extraordinary measures'. Extraordinary measures refer to "the invocation of security [...] to legitimize the use of force [...], a way for states to mobilize, or to take special powers" [13].

Briefly, the security components are depicted in the following chart:
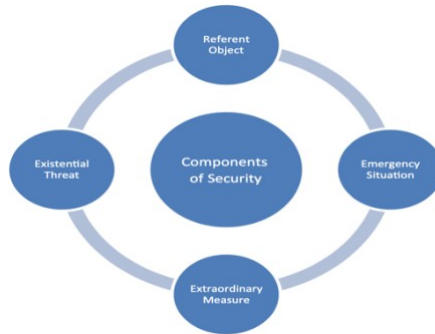
What is important for a speech act is that the determination of an existential threat requires emergency or extraordinary action, and the audience's acceptance of that discourse by the audience is significant. In simple terms, the Copenhagen School views securitization as having two stages. The first stage, pay attention to efforts to convey an issue, person, or entity as a threat to the referent object. Securitization actors can be state actors (government, politicians, military) or non-state actors such as trade unions, or popular movements, or civil society. The second stage—the crucial stage of securitization—is when the securitization actor successfully convinces the relevant audience (public opinion, politicians, military personnel, or other elites) that the referent object has been threatened [17].

As a complex mechanism, securitization can be triggered by an event or trigger other processes. In Guzzini's language, securitization can be "explanan or explanandum" [18]. Thus some literature attempts to explain what securitization has led to, while others explain what securitization has produced. Kurniawan [18] extracting from Buzan [10] also offers four components of securitization, namely; speech act, securitizing actors, audience, and facilitating conditions.

However, this theory is not without criticism. Critiques of ST expose ST's theoretical, methodological and normative weaknesses [19]. The first criticism is that theoretically ST is seen as too overemphasized in the politics of language regarding security. This conventional first generation of ST was labeled "philosophical" and gave rise to a second generation which called itself "sociological" [20]. The second generation places more emphasis on practice, context and power relations in securitization. The second criticism focuses on methodology. According to Balzacq, ST requires a more detailed methodology. The third criticism targets the moral

assumptions and implications of securitization scholarships. Baysal [21] identified ST's weaknesses, namely lack of analysis of rival views, overemphasis of speech acts and under-analysis of non-discursive practices, an elitist framework, a decisionist approach, the framework's Eurocentric perception, under analysis of audience and contextual factors, and overemphasis on macro-level discourses while ignoring micro-level practices. Two major groups of critics from Critical Security Studies emerge as well as proponents of the second generation of ST, namely the Welsh School Emancipatory Approach and the Paris School's International Political Sociology Approach.

Continuing from the methodological critique, theoretical contradictions prevent ST from having methodological coherence. There are two opposing views on Securitization Theory and can give rise to the choice of whether to allow this theory to continue to have contradictions or whether to revise it so that it has coherence for the good of Securitization Theory or Security Studies in the future. The two views are the internalist view and the externalist view [22].

The first variant, internalist, tends to be post-structuralist/post-modernist (Derridarian and/or Butler), attempts to read securitization and speech acts through the concept of 'illocutionary'. Speech acts can give rise to subjectivity which plays a role in producing the meaning of security and knowledge in it. Stritzel [22] believes that the internalist position does not require a conducive context for a successful speech act to carry out securitization. The speech act itself is constitutive between the speaker and the authority he has to 'talk about security'. According to Stritzel, this variant appeared stronger when Waever was at the beginning of his work and weakened when working together with Buzan. The second variant, externalist, tends to be constructivist in the application of securitization. This variant posits intersubjectivity as emerging from the interaction between securitization actors and relevant audiences. This second position emphasizes the conditions that facilitate securitization and the audiences that respond to securitization speech acts.

In short, this debate reveals a problem that continues to exist within the analytical framework of Securitization Theory, namely the question of what or who is capable of maneuvering beyond 'normal politics' (politicization): speech acts or the context in which relevant actors interact. To mediate the debate about this ambiguity, Stritzel [22] offers a shortcut through the interconnection between language acts and actors/audiences in a constitutive social context. More or less the same offer was also put forward by Balzacq [23] with more emphasis on the procedural side of speech act philosophy. However, Hansen [24] criticizes both. He defends the Copenhagen School by arguing that Waever and Buzan did not really need the efforts of Balzacq and Stritzel to rescue Securitization Theory from accusations of internalist dependence on linguistic acts and vagueness and weakness of terminology. Hansen [24] then leaves it up to securitization researchers to choose the route chosen by Balzacq and Stritzel or use a post-structuralist approach as he uses.

4. Case Study

Responding to a series of terrorist incidents that occurred early 2000 and culminated in the 2002 Bali Bombings, the government issued Government Regulation in Lieu of Law no. 1/2002 concerning Eradication of Criminal Acts of Terrorism. This regulation was later ratified as Law Number 15/2003. In 2010, the Government authorized the establishment of the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) which specifically handles terrorism from upstream to downstream. The existence of BNPT was strengthened by the issuance of Law Number 5 of 2018 concerning Amendments to Law Number 15 of 2003 concerning the Determination of Government Regulations in Lieu of Law Number 1 of 2002 concerning the Eradication of Criminal Acts of Terrorism into Law.

Two important things to observe regarding the Indonesian Government's policies in President Jokowi's first term of office are the ratification of the Terrorism Crime Eradication Law (PTPT) and the involvement of the TNI in counterterrorism. President Jokowi urged that Law No.5/2018 be ratified immediately after three church bombs exploded in Surabaya. He even threatened to issue a Perpu if the DPR and related ministries took too long to discuss the PTPT Bill (detik.com 2018). The President believes that this law is an important legal umbrella to help police officers to firmly prevent or crack down on terrorism (Kontras 2018).

UU no. 5 of 2018 was finally established and regulates the process of handling terrorism through a distributed scheme of roles and authority between government institutions, such as BNPT, Police and TNI. The main principles of countering terrorism in Law no. 5 of 2018 is law enforcement for acts and criminal acts of terrorism. The police, hereby, become a frontline institution with the authority to enforce the law and take action.

However, strong criticism from civil society emerged when the President involved the TNI in eradicating terrorism. The Civil Society Coalition for Security Sector Reform believes that there is no need for the TNI to be involved in the Terrorism Crime Law. This involvement can be done simply through Law No.34/2004 concerning the TNI which regulates TNI assistance in the framework of Military Operations Other Than War (OMSP). The TNI as a means of national defense does not need to be involved in law enforcement which is the domain of the National Police. Apart from that, OMSP, for example to eradicate terrorism, requires state political policies and decisions (Kompas.com 2017).

Criticism from civil society has made the latest counter-terrorism regulations more geared towards prevention. The 2020 National Plan of Action on Prevention and Countering Violent Extremism places emphasis on joint engagement with the government and the community. Through a "whole of government approach and whole of society approach", the government assures the public that this policy is a combination of soft and hard approaches in counterterrorism.

5. Discussion

5.1 Extremism as the existential threat

President Joko Widodo also believes that terrorism is an extraordinary crime that requires extraordinary handling. In front of state officials in a limited meeting on preventing and overcoming terrorism, a few days after the Surabaya Church Bombing incident, he stated that terrorism is an extraordinary crime against the nation-state and humanity (Kompas.com 2018).

The President's speech practice was conveyed to build a discourse that the existential threat is present through terrorism. Jokowi interpreted this threat as a military and political threat, saying terrorism endangered the 'nation-state' and 'humanity'. The same rhetoric also emerged from the Ministry of Defense, which considered not only terrorism, but also radical thinking. The resource person who is a high-ranking officer from the Indonesian Army stated that, "Radical thought patterns that can lead to acts of terrorism are the main and actual threat to the Indonesian state" (Interview with the Ministry of Defense, 2020). In this case, the resource person refers to the White Paper on National Defense of the Republic of Indonesia which consistently raises the narrative that radicalism, extremism, and terrorism are a threat to Indonesia's sovereignty. The following image shows that radicalism, extremism and terrorism have appeared in three Indonesian Defense White Papers (2003, 2008 and 2015)

EVOLUSI PERTAHANAN DAN RADIKALISME, EKSTREMISME, TERORISME (RET)
BUKU PUTIH PERTAHANAN RI: PERSEPSI ANCAMAN MENDESAK, KS HAN
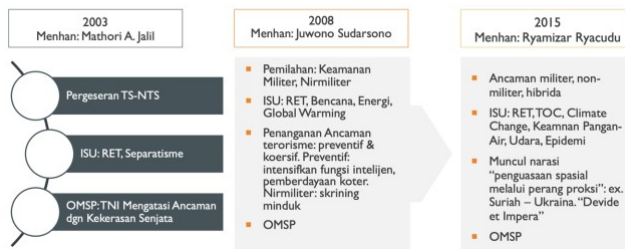
In the Indonesian Defense White Book, a paradox emerges, normatively the TNI recognizes that the TNI's task is as a defense tool whose domain is in the external region to maintain sovereignty and protect territory. This is to be distinguished from the police who work in the security and internal areas. However, by calling RET a threat to sovereignty, RET has been discussed as a defense threat. This justification arises because international terrorism is now increasingly organized and has transnational networks.

The discourse that terrorism is a state threat does not only emerge from military security agencies, but also from BNPT. Deputy KSI BNPT believes that,

> "The threat of radicalism, extremism and terrorism has the potential to disrupt the security and stability of the country or society. So it is necessary to fight against these three concepts, either through legal channels or through military repression" (BNPT Interview, 2020).

Rhetoric that terrorism and radicalism are threats also arises from civilians. Terrorism and radicalism, according to this female academic, are a threat to political security because they threaten the continuity of state ideology.

"Comparing the quantitative number of fatalities with fatalities due to other causes cannot be used as a basis that radicalism/terrorism is not a threat. Because continuous ideological threats can endanger the sovereignty of the Republic of Indonesia, which is a non-negotiable agreement." (Interview with female academic, 2020)

5.2 Countering Extremism with The Extraordinary Measures

The discourse of terrorism as an extraordinary crime by state actors and non-state actors provides a rationale for extraordinary actions such as the use of coercive power through military mobilization. The involvement of the TNI in the realm of counterterrorism is an indication of this. The involvement of the TNI in handling criminal acts of terrorism in Indonesia without restrictions has the potential to shift the strategic framework for dealing with terrorism from the criminal justice system model to the war model.

The discourse of terrorism as an extraordinary crime is also a form of rhetoric to build logistics of truth to justify military repression. If referring to Law no. 5/2018, terrorism is defined as a serious crime. In international law literature, extraordinary crimes are closer in meaning to crimes of ethnic extermination or genocide and crimes against humanity with massive victims. The definition of terrorism as an existential threat and its discourse that it threatens state ideology, state sovereignty and security, as well as humanity, is a securitization effort that could be a ticket for pressing for deeper involvement of the TNI in counter-terrorism efforts. Securitization turns terrorism, which in the national legal framework is defined as an internal threat (security), into an external threat (defense) that requires military involvement. Even though terrorism is increasingly having an international dimension, well organized and transnationally networked, which is included in the TNI's defense domain, data on victims of terrorism in Indonesia after the Bali Bombings has shown that the victims are not on a massive scale and acts of terrorism are more likely to be micro-attack patterns. (micro attack) which is more precisely the domain of the National Police.

Existing legal instruments (the TNI Law, MPR Decree of 2000, and Law No. 5/2018 concerning the Eradication of Terrorism) have provided a framework for the military to enter the civilian realm through Military Operations Other Than War (OMSP) and assistance to the police. The large number of civilian areas that the TNI enters does not always correspond to the context of external threats which should be more the focus of the TNI's professional duties - as a means of national defense from sovereignty and territorial threats - and does not necessarily require the involvement of the TNI. The absence of regulations on TNI involvement, such as the TNI Assistance Law, makes the number of MoUs between the TNI and Police become massive, reaching 41 MoUs. Operation Tinombala is one of them, apart from the involvement of the TNI in rice field printing, disaster management, or pandemic management. The

MoU is a fragile legal framework because it does not involve consultation mechanisms with other civil authorities such as the DPR or public review through the involvement of civil society. The TNI Law and the Terrorism Law actually require permission from the president and the DPR for the deployment of the TNI in the civilian realm, including counterterrorism.

The idea is that the involvement of the TNI needs to be regulated technically and the status of the escalation, the situation must be explained, whether it is full militarization or limited assistance. Civilian authorities, in this case the president assisted by BNPT, have the authority to determine the status of conflict escalations that require TNI involvement. Apart from that, a fence must be made, that this involvement is a last resort, is carried out to avoid civilian casualties (collateral damage), is carried out when civilian resources are limited or the police are not capable (niche capability), and is temporary or limited.

In a securitization framework that is based on intersubjectivity, the position of the audience becomes important as a unit of analysis. Cote (2016) offers a way of analyzing who and how audiences are involved in the securitization process. In various literatures, the audience can be diverse: a particular ministry/institution of a government, local elites, members of an organization, experts in a field or the public in a democratic country. It offers two ways of exploring audiences, (1) those involved in contextual and iterative interactions with securitization actors, and (2) those actively involved in the securitization process.

In the securitization of radicalism in Indonesia, the audiences actively involved are BNPT, TNI, Polri, DPR, Wahid Foundation, AMAN, academics, NU and Muhammadiyah. The speech acts uttered by the Government have succeeded in convincing the audience to consider radical terrorism as an extraordinary crime and requires extraordinary handling such as the use of state coercion. The ratification of Law No. 5/2018 also signals the success of this speech act.

6. Conclusion

The securitization of terrorism/extremism in Indonesia is capable to convince the audience of the use of extraordinary methods to overcome it. The Anti-Terrorism Presidential Decree which is currently in the process of being drafted is the latest measuring tool regarding the escalation of discourse on terrorism/extremism as an existential threat to Indonesia.

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