



The Indonesian government responds to protecting the natuna area through the utilization of national security

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ABSTRACT

The primary aim of this research is to enhance surveillance of the sea area in Natuna using the principles of national security. This policy entails the Indonesian government's strategic utilization to validate Jakarta's national interests in Natuna vis-à-vis China. Concurrently, the national security strategy underscores a range of endeavors to protect Indonesia's sovereignty beyond military defense. This article to demonstrate that Indonesia possesses a robust bargaining position in safeguarding the Natuna region. This research adopts a qualitative approach centered on the analysis of specific case studies. The descriptive-explanatory methodology elucidates Indonesia's policies in securing its maritime interests in Natuna. Indonesia's significance as a nation and its unwavering commitment to preserving its territorial integrity. This study not only for reference, but also to foster national pride, and offer valuable perspectives for the nation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Natuna region is strategically positioned along a vital trade route through which commercial vessels from various Asian nations pass. Located near the South China Sea, it serves as a crucial pathway for the Transport and Communication Sea Lanes, facilitating the passage of ships traveling between the Americas and Asia to the Middle East. An approximate count of 40,000 ships traverse this route annually (Sari, 2017). The Natuna Region's strategic significance is recognized due to its geographical location, rendering it a crucial component of the ALKI I route. ALKI, known as the Indonesian Archipelago Sea Lane, comprises three segments designed to provide guidance on the navigation of vessels within Indonesian maritime territories (Utama et al., 2017).

The matter of maritime sovereignty and security is of considerable importance to a nation because of the sea's crucial function as a key channel for telecommunications, transportation, and international commerce. Indonesia encompasses approximately 17,508 islands and boasts a vast coastline stretching 81,000 kilometers. A significant portion, around 62% or roughly 6.32 million square kilometers, of Indonesia's landmass consists of water bodies (Finaka & Paolo, 2018). In January 2016 witnessed a maritime occurrence within the Natuna waters which involved unauthorized fishing activities conducted by Chinese maritime vessels. The Indonesian naval forces intercepted and apprehended the vessels, nevertheless, the situation intensified with the intervention of Chinese Coast Guard (CCG) vessels that encircled an Indonesian naval vessel. This occurrence triggered a diplomatic dispute between Indonesia and China, as Indonesia affirmed its jurisdiction over its IEEZ while refuting China's assertions regarding the nine-dash line in the South China Sea. The incident underscored Indonesia's imperative to assert its sovereignty and safeguard its maritime concerns in the region (Kompas.com, 2021; Tribunnews.com, 2020).

Indonesia experienced annual losses of at least USD 4 billion, which is equivalent to IDR 56.13 trillion (Firmansyah & Darisman, 2020). The Indonesian government has enacted numerous policies and strategies to uphold maritime sovereignty in the Natuna region, particularly in response to the escalating incursions by China. The empirical evidence, such as: increased naval patrols through the deployment of additional naval assets, has reportedly led to a reduction in illegal fishing and other unauthorized activities within the waters of Natuna. Furthermore, the implementation of infrastructure development, characterized by the construction of new military bases and radar installations, has significantly enhanced surveillance and response capabilities. The Natuna Islands stand as a vital cornerstone of Indonesia's national interests, encompassing critical economic, security, and geopolitical facets that cannot be overlooked. The Natuna region boasts an abundance of natural resources, particularly in fisheries and promising hydrocarbon reserves. Safeguarding these invaluable resources is essential for Indonesia's economic prosperity. Moreover, the North Natuna Sea (the South China Sea) ranks among the most heavily trafficked maritime corridors globally. Gaining control over the Natuna region empowers Indonesia to protect its shipping routes and guarantee the uninterrupted flow of trade. Indonesia's position regarding the Natuna region and the South China Sea conflict mirrors broader international initiatives aimed at upholding UNCLOS and ensuring freedom of navigation. This strategic alignment not only solidifies Indonesia's stance but also attracts support from influential global powers like the United States, Japan, Australia, and ASEAN. The persistent conflict in the South China Sea, coupled with the strategic rivalry among major powers, adds layers of complexity to the situation, demanding a comprehensive and adaptable strategy from Indonesia.

Indonesia finds itself compelled to adopt a more assertive stance on maritime security matters, particularly in response to escalating tensions in the Natuna area, stemming from the complex situation in the South China Sea. This necessity has been further underscored by the intrusion of numerous unauthorized Chinese vessels into Indonesian territorial waters back in 2016 (Ihsanuddin, 2020), the situation in Natuna has become more complex. China has put forward a claim unilaterally since 1947 in the South China Sea region, presenting a map with dotted lines. This claim has led to conflicts, especially in Indonesia. The assertion contradicts Article 57 of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which acknowledges Indonesia's rights as an archipelagic nation. Moreover, the ratification of the UNCLOS Decision is addressed in Law No. 5 of 1983, governing Indonesia's Exclusive Economic Zone (IEEZ) (Aida, 2014).

In compliance with the regulations delineated in Article 57 of UNCLOS, a nation that shares a boundary with the ocean possesses the exclusive entitlement to explore, exploit, protect, and manage the resources, be they organic or inorganic, situated in the water column above the seabed and its substrata, encompassing the contiguous continental shelf up to 200 nautical miles from its baselines. This provision, conferring upon Indonesia the particular privileges over the marine life and other resources within the IEEZ, that encompasses the Natuna waters, was enshrined in Legislation No. 5 of 1983 concerning the EEZ and the Continental Shelf. Natuna holds a strategic position adjacent to the South China Sea and numerous ASEAN states, rendering it a pivotal area for Indonesia's defense and territorial integrity (Iswardhana & Arisanto, 2022).

The research aims to achieve the subsequent objectives: To assess the application of national security by the Indonesian government in safeguarding its maritime sovereignty in the Natuna region and in managing associated challenges. Also, to scrutinize the impacts of China's declarations and behaviors on the policy and tactic formations of the Indonesian government in securing the Natuna region, alongside exploring alternative approaches beyond soft power actions.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The research involved conducting case studies based on real-world data using explanatory qualitative methodologies and a contextual case study methodology. Throughout various phases of in-depth description, appropriate conclusions were derived. The research stages included deepening the problem, reviewing literature, gathering data, assessing descriptive data, and successive assembly. Data analysis involved analytical descriptions, tables, and graphs to connect findings and data interpretation with theory. The process encompassed gathering, analyzing, interpreting, matching data with theory, and drawing conclusions supported by the data (Nugrahani, 2014). The case study focused on the protection of Natuna was chosen due to the pressing nature

and factual circumstances surrounding China's endeavors to appropriate the territory. The classification of the Natuna region is established as the area within Indonesia that has experienced the highest incidence of violations by the CCG and Chinese fishermen.

Explanatory qualitative research can be utilized to examine hypotheses, offer explanations, and present resolutions to issues through a thorough analytical process (Suryabrata, 2018). Furthermore, data analysis plays a crucial role in obtaining essential information for this study, allowing for a logical scientific explanation, clarification of the nature of the current challenges, and prevention of oversimplification (Krisyantono, 2014). Several methodologies are utilized in this study: a) Academic inquiry: data collection procedures rely on a variety of publications and official declarations pertinent to the investigation; subsequently, a coherent and comprehensive timeline is established. b) Utilization of available data: the categorization of essential data that is closely linked and subsequently examined to identify connections or correlations between datasets, determining whether they are interrelated or not. c) Analyzing: this study highlights the correlation between the theoretical framework and various practical aspects associated with the case under review. The objective is to address research inquiries grounded in these two frameworks. At the conclusion, this study will deliver precise and coherent findings.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

History of Natuna Border Conflict with China

Natuna, an archipelago situated in the Riau Province, consists of 154 islands. Geopolitically, the strategic positioning of Natuna is noteworthy; it is adjacent to various neighboring countries, such as the South China Sea to the north, Peninsular Malaysia to the West and East, and Bintan Regency to the South (Pemerintah Kabupaten Natuna, 2019). The sea surrounding Natuna is recognized for its significant potential in the development of natural resources, particularly marine fish. Specifically, areas such as Bunguran Island, Midai, Tambelan, Natuna Besar, Serasan Island, and Coastal Natuna Island, which receive ample rainfall and contribute to the water supply, are notably rich in these resources. Natuna region spans across 262,197 square kilometers of the Indonesian maritime territory, accounting for 3.25 million square kilometers in total. With the sea area comprising 99% of Natuna's overall expanse, it clearly demonstrates a substantial opportunity for economic growth (Pemerintah Kabupaten Natuna, 2020). The geographical location of the Natuna area is conducive for the production of fishery commodities, which show promising commercial potential and increasing value annually. In this region, capture fisheries are predominant over aquaculture, as indicated in table 1.

Table 1. The complete aquatic yield in natuna from 2014 to 2018

Year	Capture Fisheries	Aquaculture	Total
2014	47,341.58 tons	2,479.12 tons	49,820.70 tons
2015	48,698.84 tons	754.84 tons	49,453.68 tons
2018	87,248.25 tons	76,896 tons	16,144.25 tons

Source: (Pemerintah Kabupaten Natuna, 2019; Pusat Data Statistik dan Informasi Kementerian Kelautan dan Perikanan (PDD KPP), 2015).

The terminology "South China Sea" has been utilized for a significant duration, predating the 3rd century AD, by Chinese fishermen, sailors, and realms. Furthermore, it was embraced by seafarers and explorers originating from the Southern Sea. During the 20th century, there was an escalation in China's hegemony within the area, exemplified by the inclusion of a discontinuous line on 1914's official map of China, which was constructed based on the perspectives of two Chinese mapmakers. Subsequently, in 1935, China proclaimed its authority over a segment of the South China Sea, thereby consolidating its predominance in the region (Time.com, 2016)

In 1947, China released an authoritative map containing a series of discontinuous lines, devoid of any legal rationale, except for a reference to its historical context (BOIEOSA, 2014). The subsequent year saw the publication of an updated version of the map featuring eleven such broken lines. In 1953, the Chinese government unveiled yet another map displaying only two segments from the original eleven lines. By May 2009, China made a territorial claim over nine disjointed line segments embodied in the U-shaped line, encompassing the Natuna region that Indonesia seeks to protect. Subsequently, in July 2010, Indonesia communicated to the United Nations its stance that the Nine Dash Line lacks legal validity and violates the United Nations

Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) of 1982, aiming to safeguard its territorial, economic, and energy concerns (Beckman, 2011). Despite escalating tensions in the Natuna region from 2013 to 2014, Indonesia refrained from taking any further actions. Nonetheless, Indonesian media platforms such as Kompas, Jakarta Globe, Jakarta News, and Antara News had already been covering China's illicit fishing practices and security issues in the Natuna area (Rofii, 2020).

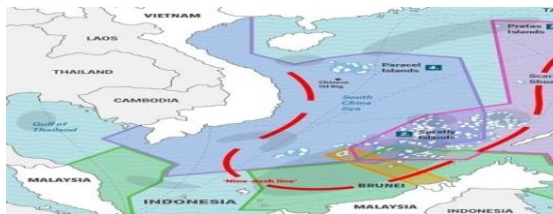


Figure 1. Map of nine dash line dispute

Source: (ABS.com, 2022).

The disagreement between China and Indonesia escalated when Chinese vessels unlawfully entered Indonesian waters on March 19, 2016, partaking in unauthorized fishing activities within the Natuna waters. Subsequently, eight Chinese ship crew members were apprehended by the Indonesian military. A Chinese vessel known as *Kway Fey* was captured by the Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Ministry Shark Monitoring Ship 11 for allegedly engaging in fishing within Indonesia's EEZ. However, during the attempt to apprehend the *Kway Fey* crew members, the CCG intervened and collided with the *Kway Fey* ship (Detik.com, 2016; Prayoga & Iskandar, 2019). The following enumeration illustrates instances of foreign vessels and the occurrences of breaches of territory within the waters of Natuna. Since 2013-2024, it has been recorded that CCG and Chinese research vessels have often entered Natuna waters. For example, the *Kway Fey*, CCG 5204, *Hay Yang Di Zhi*, *Yuan Wang* and various other vessels. This has raised concerns and caused Indonesia to deploy its *Bakamla* and warships as a response. (CNN Indonesia, 2020a, 2020b). On the 27th of May 2016, the *Oswald Siahaan-354*, an Indonesian frigate vessel, identified the presence of the Chinese vessel on its radar system. A pursuit ensued between the two vessels as the Indonesian vessel sought to apprehend the Chinese ship for breaching Indonesian maritime boundaries. Despite efforts to evade capture, the *Gui Bei Yu* was eventually apprehended for unauthorized entry into IEEZ and was charged with theft of fish, escalating tensions between Indonesia and China.

After China's incursion into the territorial waters of Indonesia, the populace of Indonesia was deeply concerned, leading the government to take resolute measures to protect its sovereignty. Furthermore, in accordance with the stipulations delineated in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) of 1982, traditional fishing practices do not hold legal validity, and any foreign state intending to engage in fishing within an exclusive economic zone must establish a bilateral agreement with the respective country. Nevertheless, discussions between China and Indonesia have not yet resulted in a mutual understanding regarding fishing activities in Indonesian maritime territories. Currently, there exists no disagreement between Indonesia and China concerning the waters around Natuna. Despite Indonesia's assertion that Natuna falls within its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), this position contradicts China's demarcation known as the nine-dash line, a claim that Indonesia dismisses as lacking legal basis under UNCLOS 1982. Indonesia, on the other hand, opts to assert its territorial claim based on the principles of the EEZ (The Diplomat, 2020). Domestically, various legal scholars and international bodies have analyzed Indonesia's actions, generally finding them to be in conformity with international law. Internationally, Indonesia has garnered support from ASEAN and other nations for its stance on maritime sovereignty, emphasizing the importance of upholding international law and UNCLOS.

The Indonesian response within the Natuna region Strengthening the development of Bakamla

The establishment of Indonesian Maritime Security Agency or *Bakamla* was initiated with the objective of ensuring the protection of the seas and enhancing security. *Bakamla* has been

actively engaged in security operations, particularly in the Natuna region. Since its establishment. Serving as the principal entity responsible for maritime security affairs, Bakamla routinely undertakes operations to apprehend illicit vessels, including those trespassing into Indonesian waters from China and other countries. Nevertheless, Bakamla stands out not only through the utilization of an Early Warning System but also with the Single Agency Multi Task (SAMT) approach. Safeguarding Indonesia's sovereignty over its maritime territory requires three essential security systems: Bakamla's comprehensiveness encompassing personnel, fleet, air fleet, armaments, infrastructure, technology, information systems, and other related aspects. An integrity system is also vital to combat corruption, and finally, a holistic employee education and training system spanning various disciplines is imperative. These measures play a critical role in upholding economic stability and ensuring the protective capacity of the marine ecosystem (Iswardhana et al., 2021). The SAMT represents a system of organization in which Bakamla exercises exclusive authority over multiple stakeholder ministries, encompassing various departments such as the Ministries of Defense, Foreign Affairs, Home Affairs, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Law and Human Rights, Transportation, Finance, the National Armed Forces Commander, the Attorney General, the Police Chief, the Chief of Staff of the Indonesian Navy, and the Head of the Intelligence Agency (Wibawa et al., 2021).

Natuna's Military Asset Deployment

In order to protect the Natuna Sea from Chinese fishing vessels entering the Natuna EEZ region, the TNI has deployed eight warships for maritime activities. The fleet consists of frigates, corvettes, as well as tanks and logistics carriers. Presented here is a list of Indonesian Warships stationed in Natuna:

Table 2. Indonesia war ship models positioned in natuna

Type of war ship	Ship Name
Frigate	378-KRI Sutendi Senoputra
	381-KRI Tjiptadi
	385-KRI Teuku Umar
	358-KRI Jhon Lie
	359-KRI Usman Harun
Corvette	351-KRI Ahmad Yani
	356-KRI K.S. Tubun
Logistic	905-KRI Tarakan
	536-KRI Teluk Sibolga

Source: (CNN Indonesia, 2020a; Warta Ekonomi, 2020).

In addition to deploying eight naval vessels, the Indonesian Navy also sent out a maritime surveillance aircraft equipped with a dual radar system, known as the Boeing 737 'Camar Emas', with the capability to detect both surface and aerial targets within a range of up to 256 nautical miles. Furthermore, four F-16 fighter jets from Air Squadron 16 based at the Roesmin Nurjadin Air Base, also referred to as "Lintang Elang 20," of the Indonesian Air Force were also mobilized. Lieutenant Colonel Fajar Tri Rohadi, the Head of Information Service for the 1st Koarmada Marine, emphasized that these aircraft and ships were not deployed for military purposes but rather to showcase Indonesia's presence in the Natuna region, rather than for combat operations (CNN Indonesia, 2020b).

Natuna's Military Asset Deployment

The CCG ships were observed in the North Natuna Sea within Indonesia's EEZ on January 2, 2020. In light of this situation, the First Fleet Command of the Indonesian Navy decided to enact a robust maritime diplomacy strategy (Dari Laut.id, 2020). A response was initiated by Indonesia, dispatching the Tjiptadi 381 Warship to intercept and escort away the CCG vessels that were supporting Chinese fishing activities in violation of maritime regulations. This particular operation serves as a clear example of the utilization of hard Power, which encompasses the deployment of military assets or weaponry, as the KRIs are classified as naval warships and fall under the category of military resources.

There are also policies of President Jokowi's to submerge ships was taken to safeguard Indonesia's sovereignty over its maritime domain. In parallel, the former Minister of Marine Affairs

and Fisheries, Susi Pudjiastuti, from 2014 to 2019, focusing on scuttling unauthorized vessels breaching IUUF regulations. However, the recent transition in leadership within the Minister of Marine's office prompted a shift in policy from sinking ships to capturing them instead. Subsequently, the confiscated illegal boats were redistributed to local fishermen with the aim of enhancing the skills and livelihoods of community members (Merdeka.com, 2020). In the year 2021, a total of 100 foreign vessels were observed in the waters of Natuna. Similarly, in 2022, there were 52 foreign ships identified, followed by 49 foreign vessels in 2023, and 61 foreign ships in the year 2024 (Hakim, 2023). The count of captured vessels stood at 53 in 2021, decreased to 18 in 2022, further dropped to 10 in 2023, and 13 of ships were apprehended in the current year (Ambarwati & Yuniato, 2024).

The presence of government officials in Natuna between 2015 and 2020

On the 15th of September, 2015, Ryamizard Ryacudu, who served as Defense Minister from 2014 to 2019, undertook a journey to Natuna Island with the aim of evaluating the defense infrastructure and amenities. His itinerary included visits to Infantry Battalion 134, Ranai TNI Base, Military District Command (Kodim) 0318, and Ranai Air Force Base. The main objective of this expedition was to formulate national defense strategies for the outlying islands of Indonesia. Subsequently, Ryacudu proceeded to the remote islands of Sekatung Island and the Border Security Post the following day, where he provided guidance to the TNI soldiers stationed there (Antara, 2015). Subsequently, on March 8th, 2017, Ryacudu undertook another journey to Natuna Island to accompany the Political Coordinating Minister. This visit was to inaugurate the Gerbangdutas initiative, which is designed to enhance the development of national border regions through government involvement. While visiting the island, the Defense Minister oversaw the advancement of various infrastructure and defense projects, including the expansion of the runway at the R. Sajad Air Base and the establishment of Pron and Sarprasa R. Sajad Air Base. Additionally, there are intentions to construct TNI barracks capable of accommodating 200 individuals in 2018, Sarpras R. Sajad Air Base, and a Combat Aircraft Standby Shelter (Kementerian Komunikasi dan Informatika RI, 2017).

On the 8th of January, 2020, a visit was made by Joko Widodo, the esteemed leader of Indonesia, accompanied by a delegation of notable representatives, to Natuna Island. The scheduled program included a tour of the Marine Center and Marine Center Port, along with an examination of the Integrated Fisheries Department (SPKT) situated in Lampa Strait. The primary objective of this visit was to carry out an assessment of the Indonesian naval ships, namely KS Tubun 356 and Usman Harun 359, which play a crucial role in enforcing regulations related to natural resources within the EEZ region (Ihsanuddin, 2020). On the 5th of February in the year 2020, a visit was made by Prabowo Subianto, the Defense Minister of Indonesia, and Dr. Terawan, the Health Minister, to Natuna in order to provide reassurance to the residents regarding the vigilant monitoring of 238 Indonesian citizens who had returned from Wuhan, China, at the military installation in Natuna. It was emphasized to the community the importance of remaining calm and having trust in the government's endeavors. The selection of Natuna as the observation site was based on its distance from residential areas, as well as its well-equipped infrastructure and emergency response teams (Antara, 2020).

Respond of Indonesia to China's Territory Violation as National Security

In the realm of national security theory, which was initially rooted in military aspects and focused on safeguarding the nation, there has been a notable expansion to encompass the well-being of individuals. This broader perspective now includes the protection of people, society, the nation, and the state. Barry Buzan broadened the scope of security to involve various fields such as political, economic, environmental, social, and military aspects. It was emphasized that security incorporates non-military elements as well (Perwita, 2008). Governments strive to safeguard national interests through the utilization of political, economic, and military strategies in response to threats to national security. The security framework evolved during the Cold War, emphasizing the importance of balancing military strength, political considerations, and technological progress. Indrawan refers to the definition of national security provided by Walter Lippman (Indrawan, 2016): *"a country is considered secure when it can maintain its core values without resorting to war and can defend them successfully in the event of a challenge"*. The concept of safeguarding the nation should consider internal and external challenges to its autonomy, well-being, existence, and other

national priorities. Approaches utilizing national assets, exerting influence, and ensuring supervision should be formulated and implemented to ensure security.

Regarding the analysis provided, Indonesia finds itself in a challenging position when it comes to disputes with China. China, emerging as a prominent global power, possesses vast territory, a sizable population, a robust economy, and a formidable defense. Concurrently, Indonesia is striving to advance towards becoming a developed nation by the year 2045. This particular circumstance highlights the hurdles Indonesia faces in terms of its national security across various sectors. Despite the fact that the tensions in Natuna have not escalated into a full-fledged conflict, China's assertions have been accompanied by the presence of numerous fishing vessels and the CCG in the region. The geographical location of Natuna, situated amidst Sumatra and Kalimantan and prone to isolation, further exacerbates its vulnerability. Consequently, Indonesian fishermen are encountering threats and disruptions in their economic endeavors. Moreover, China's territorial claims have impeded activities such as oil and gas exploration in the area.

It is deemed appropriate for Indonesia to safeguard Natuna as a governmental responsibility. Furthermore, the realm of security encompasses not only military aspects but also economic and political dimensions. The various military and civilian initiatives undertaken by Indonesia are strategic measures aimed at upholding the sovereignty and autonomy of each of its regions. It is imperative for a state to safeguard its national interests while striving to minimize the recourse to war. The deployment of military technology and the practice of hosting political dignitaries serve as tangible manifestations of Indonesia's efforts in safeguarding Natuna. Indonesia's significant position and role in global politics are exemplified by the various factors mentioned above. In case of any disturbance or threat to national interests, the Government of Indonesia may implement policies to safeguard them, even if this has implications for multiple nations worldwide. While not necessarily related to the Natuna situation, it highlights Indonesia's important and strategic position, as evidenced by its presence in Natuna. The Indonesian government is employing hard power diplomacy vis-a-vis China through the deployment of civil, military, and national representatives in Natuna. Through these means, the country can leverage issues across different sectors to uphold national interests and seek resolutions in various scenarios, thereby reshaping global perceptions of Indonesia. This approach underscores Indonesia's considerable bargaining power, enabling it to influence both regional and global political dynamics by aligning domestic and international elements to address local requirements. Also, the Government should consider prioritizing the achievement of national interests and carefully determine the appropriate type and method of power to utilize. Indonesian authorities are encouraged to assess the perceived threats posed by China in order to make informed decisions regarding the necessity of protection or the possibility of overlooking such concerns. The application of hard power diplomacy may serve as a valuable and astute instrument for the practice of statecraft. This particular approach effectively combines idealistic principles with realistic considerations, incorporating the management of resources and the implementation of diplomatic tactics. The utilization of hard power is of paramount importance and serves as a strategic means to influence other nations, enhance legitimacy, and ultimately advance national interests.

Firstly, the establishment of Bakamla in Indonesia is intricately connected to the military aspect, forming part of the Government's efforts to safeguard the Natuna region and uphold national interests. Bakamla represents Indonesia's hard power strategy, utilizing assertive measures through a civilian approach to protect its sovereign territory. The Natuna Islands, an integral part of Indonesian territory, are positioned in close proximity to the Nine Dash Line claimed by China, posing a threat to Indonesia's sovereignty. The utilization of a Tough Power strategy by the authorities via Bakamla is a response to China's territorial assertions and the presence of soldiers from the CCG, perceived as a military challenge to Indonesia. Bakamla was founded to coordinate and cooperate with all military endeavors in Indonesia to demonstrate the Government's presence and defend the Natuna Islands, ultimately ensuring sovereignty. Therefore, Bakamla plays a vital role in advancing Indonesia's national security policy, especially in addressing China's claims over Natuna amidst political, sovereignty, security, and military obstacles.

Secondly, the deployment of military assets in Natuna, through the coordinated efforts of the army, navy, and air force, serves as a clear indication of the Indonesian Government's strong commitment to safeguarding all its territories. Safeguarding the borders of Indonesia remains a

paramount concern for President Joko Widodo's administration, encompassing all domains including airspace, land, and maritime areas. Unlike previous administrations, the current Government demonstrates a heightened level of vigilance in ensuring the security of the nation's maritime boundaries. The Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) have established sophisticated defense mechanisms to safeguard the natural resources located within the Natuna EEZ. In order to uphold law and order, the TNI has effectively utilized its comprehensive combat capabilities, involving the navy, army, and air force, in the waters of the North Natuna Sea.

Thirdly, the placement of naval vessels and combat aircraft in Natuna plays a crucial role in safeguarding Indonesia's national security and demonstrates a steadfast commitment to preserving its territorial sovereignty. These military maneuvers not only showcase Indonesia's formidable strength but also play a vital role in addressing security challenges in the Natuna region. The military presence not only instills a sense of safety among the local populace but also aligns with the country's strategic hard power diplomacy approach. This security aspect gains particular importance due to the abundant natural resources found in Natuna, including oil, marine biodiversity, and natural gas. Through regular patrols and surveillance missions in the area, both China and the global community are unmistakably notified of Indonesia's readiness to defend its sovereignty through necessary means. Additionally, it is imperative to encourage synergy between the Navy and Air Force to elevate their operational capacities and promote cohesion within the Indonesian military. *Fourthly*, the visits of several high-ranking national officials have signified that the Natuna dispute has garnered the attention of both the Indonesian government and society. Statements made by officials at the Presidential and Ministerial levels have conveyed Indonesia's concerns regarding China's unilateral actions. It is worth noting that China's military capabilities have experienced a significant boost and surpass those of Indonesia. The deployment of government civilian representatives to Natuna aboard warships further exemplifies the commitment of Indonesian leaders to safeguarding the region.

The establishment of new military bases and deployment of various military forces have improved Indonesia's ability to monitor and respond to incursions. This has contributed to a more stable and secure maritime environment in the Natuna region. Moreover, the increased naval patrols and presence in the Natuna waters have led to a significant reduction in illegal fishing activities by foreign vessels. Reports indicate that the frequency of such incidents has decreased, showcasing the effectiveness of enhanced maritime surveillance. Also, Indonesian authorities have successfully intercepted and seized numerous foreign vessels engaged in illegal activities. These actions serve as a deterrent to potential violators.

4. CONCLUSION

The strategies implemented by the Indonesian administration to secure sovereignty and national security in Natuna reflect their strong commitment to protect each of its territories. From domestic perspective, a range of esteemed legal experts and international organizations have conducted thorough examinations of Indonesia's actions, typically concluding that they align with the principles of international law. On the global stage, Indonesia has successfully secured the backing of ASEAN and various other nations for its position on maritime sovereignty, highlighting the critical significance of adhering to international law of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). For this reason, various strategies are implemented by use of various approaches in the military, governmental, and other domains serves as solid evidence of their determination to protect Natuna, despite China's claims. Indonesia's efforts extend beyond the political sphere to include the military realm, which plays a crucial role in contemporary international relations. In reaction to the accusations and provocations from China, Indonesia has implemented a range of policy measures with the goal of enacting hard power to showcase its dedication to safeguarding its territorial integrity in Natuna. Through the utilization of national security, the Indonesian leadership is showcasing its steadfast position as the rightful proprietor of Natuna, conveying a strong message to China. This communication not only reinforces Indonesia's allegiance to Natuna but also enhances its bargaining power. Hard power utilization encompasses a blend of political strategies and military components, such as the enforcement of order by Bakamla, official visits by pertinent government authorities, the deployment of military troops, and the sinking of unauthorized foreign vessels. All of these measures underscore the government's

engagement in the political and security realms while also illustrating Indonesia's supremacy and fostering a sense of assurance and control over Natuna.

The military bases and the strategic deployment of diverse military forces have remarkably bolstered Indonesia's capacity to effectively monitor and swiftly respond to incursions. This proactive approach has undeniably fostered a significantly more stable and secure maritime environment in the Natuna region. Furthermore, the intensified naval patrols and increased presence in the Natuna waters have resulted in a dramatic decline in illegal fishing activities perpetrated by foreign vessels. Reports clearly demonstrate that the frequency of such incidents has notably diminished, underscoring the impressive effectiveness of enhanced maritime surveillance. Additionally, Indonesian authorities have triumphantly intercepted and confiscated numerous foreign vessels involved in illegal activities. These decisive actions act as a powerful deterrent to potential violators.

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