

Indonesia's Response to Australia's Wiretapping of Several Important People in Indonesia in 2013

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Abstract

Bilateral relations between Indonesia and Australia often experience ups and downs, including a number of conflicts that have made relations between the two countries strained, especially during the administration of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. In the era of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the espionage incident received significant media attention when Edward Snowden revealed the identities of several Indonesian officials who were also targeted by SIGINT's eavesdropping operations in Asia, especially in Australia. President SBY (Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono) at that time lost his temper after finding out that it turned out that his cellphone was tapped by the Australian Intelligence Agency. The news of the case carried out by the Australian state against several officials in Indonesia raises the question on what basis Indonesia responded to the case. There are concerns about Indonesia's groundwork in handling these cases in light of news of Australia's prosecution of prominent Indonesian figures. reported in 2013 by Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of the Republic of Indonesia. Indonesia took several steps in responding to the act of wiretapping. First, Indonesia asked for official clarification and clarity from Australia, and second, the Indonesian Government protested by stopping and rethinking a number of bilateral cooperation with Australia for a while until there was a clear response and confidence that there would be no wiretapping for the guard of the country's interests. Although Indonesia showed disappointment regarding the wiretapping action carried out by Australia and Indonesia as the party that decided on a number of cooperation, Indonesia first contacted the Australian side after the revelation of this case.

Keywords: Espionage, Indonesia, Australia, bilateral, government

1. Introduction

Diplomatic relations between Australia and Indonesia were strained in 2013. Australia carried out espionage against Indonesia, especially through the mobile phone of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and several Indonesian officials. Espionage or in English Espionage is defined in the Great Dictionary of Indonesian (KBBI) is a confidential investigation of military data and economic data of other countries, everything related to the ins and outs of the mirror; the spy as an accusation. Not only President SBY's communication equipment was breached, but the equipment of nine other officials, including Mrs. Ani Yudhoyono's state, was also breached. Of course, the wiretapping carried out by Australia caused losses for Indonesia. Australia may have some important and highly confidential information about Indonesia, including its defense plans, which is the reason why Indonesia may be in a setback. This is clearly against privacy laws in Indonesia. Because Australia will be able to influence any future policies issued by Indonesia if they get complete information about the country. In comparison, if Australia and Indonesia are two interdependent things, and if Australia knows every card that Indonesia has, then Australia can predict and read every move that Indonesia will make. (Setiawan, n.d.)



Figure 1.1 President SBY and Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbot
Source: Saleh, 2013

At that time, diplomatic relations between Australia and Indonesia were at a low point and were colored by tension. One of them is the withdrawal of the Indonesian Embassy from Australia until diplomatic relations improve again. There is no doubt that eavesdropping operations in Australia cost Indonesia a large amount. Australia has been accused of insulting the Indonesian people with this scandal, and there have been several cases where Australian nationalism has violated the sovereignty of the Republic of Indonesia over state secrets and information. Because state information is one aspect of national security, and cybersecurity threats are national threats, according to Forest Hare's book, *The Cyber Threat to National Security: Why Can't We Agree?* Cyber espionage is the cyber threat discussed here. Therefore, cyber espionage is dangerous for the country.

The problem of wiretapping arises when the relationship between the two countries is good, but if the wiretapping case is not handled properly, the bilateral relationship may end abruptly. Considering that the key to Canberra's influence in Asia is Indonesia itself. So far, the wiretapping operations carried out by a country against another country in the context of international relations have not been carried out, no concrete steps have been taken to answer the question of whether wiretapping or espionage is right or wrong, morally wrong, eavesdropping behavior, we cannot claim that this is a completely new problem. However, according to research on international relations, telephone tapping has violated a number of internationally applicable principles. (Farraisy, 2019)

If Australia does not take an official stance on the issue, the impact of the wiretapping on diplomatic relations between the two countries will be catastrophic. However, the breakdown of diplomatic relations will have a long-term negative impact on both countries. These countries have developed strong cooperative relationships in areas such as tourism, security, and the economy, which means they cannot be left alone.



Figure 1.2 Technical Australian eavesdropping on Indonesia
Source: The Guardian 2013

In November 2013, the Indonesian people were shocked by the news of the eavesdropping that Australia had made to Indonesia, namely they eavesdropped on the talks of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and other state officials. The technical thing that Australia does for this interception is through a stealth call directed to the target phone, and when it is connected to the target phone, the stealth phone will intercept the network connection and take all the necessary data without anyone's permission. (Salehun & Sulaiman, 2019)

2. Method

Qualitative methods in research are approaches used to understand phenomena or events from a more in-depth, complex, and descriptive perspective. This method focuses on meaning, interpretation, and context, as well as paying attention to the subjective aspects of the research participants. In the context of research on Indonesia's response to Australia's wiretapping of several important people in Indonesia in 2013, qualitative methods can be used to dig deeper into how Indonesians, the government, and other relevant parties responded to the incident.

In using qualitative methods, researchers can conduct various data collection techniques such as in-depth interviews with key informants, document analysis, participatory observation, or content analysis from mass media or official government publications. This approach allows researchers to understand the viewpoints, attitudes, perceptions, and social, political, and cultural impacts of the incident in a broader context.

3. Results and Discussion

The settlement process taken by Indonesia against the espionage carried out by Australia is that Indonesia takes diplomatic and political steps. Indonesia issued three temporary policies against Australia. The first step taken by Indonesia is the withdrawal of the Indonesian Ambassador in Australia and summoning the Australian Ambassador to be questioned about the wiretapping incident that occurred. Furthermore, Indonesia re-examined cooperation with Australia and temporarily suspended some ongoing cooperation between the two countries, especially in the military field. In addition, the President of Indonesia also sent an official letter to Australia expressing his disapproval of the wiretapping incident. Of the three policies, the Australian Prime Minister responded and negotiated with Indonesia which eventually resulted in six Indonesian foreign policies towards Australia. Indonesia and Australia finally signed a

protocol and code of ethics for cooperation . The signing of this cooperation code of ethics is expected to restore the battery relationship between Indonesia and Australia which was disrupted by this wiretapping incident and to maintain regional stability. In resolving this espionage case, Indonesia tries to avoid all forms of threats that can harm its own national interests. The goal is to maintain good bilateral relations with Australia while still protecting Indonesia's national interests.

National Security Theory

Edy Prasetyo defines national security as a government political policy that seeks to maintain a safe and favorable environment for the administration of government in order to protect important national objectives from all disturbances and threats. In addition to state security, national security places great emphasis on the safety of citizens and the community. Australia's espionage against a number of influential Indonesians can pose a threat to national security. By tapping the cellphone of the President of Indonesia at the time, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, and a number of other important people in Indonesia, Edward Snowden managed to leak one of the secret documents held by the Australian Ministry of Defense (Department of Defense). Australia can use these wiretaps to obtain sensitive information from Indonesia, including data related to defense and security. Australia may use this personal information to harm Indonesia directly or indirectly.

Analytical Approach Theory

The Analytical Approach states that a country's internal and national interests have an impact on its foreign policy. The Indonesian government issued three policies against Australia in response to Australia's espionage against a number of Indonesian figures. Initially, Australian Ambassador to Indonesia Greg Moriarty was summoned to Canberra by Indonesian Ambassador Nadjib Riphath to provide details about the wiretapping incident. Second, when reviewing Australia-Indonesia cooperation, it was noted that several important partnerships—including those related to defence and security cooperation, were temporarily suspended. In the end, the President protested the phone hacking incident by sending an official statement to Australia. The issuance of the three policies is intended to maintain national stability in Indonesia. In an effort to eliminate the notion that espionage is a threat, the two countries also signed a protocol and code of conduct for cooperation (Code of Conduct) on August 28, 2018.

The beginning of cooperation between Indonesia and Australia

The closest country to mainland Australia is Indonesia. The relationship between the two countries has a long history. Foreign relations between Australia and Indonesia from year to year have always experienced ups and downs. There was a time when the two countries had a friendly relationship at the formal level of government. But other times, the relationship between Australia and Indonesia is also in a tense position and blaming each other. Some of the factors that cause the ups and downs of diplomatic relations between the two countries are differences in the implementation of democracy, foreign policy policies, the lack of strong economic relations between the two countries, and the emergence of concerns over the security threats of each country. At the time of the initial period of the establishment of relations between Indonesia and Australia, it can be said that it was going well.

Since 1945, Australia and Indonesia have established close relations. Australia became the first country to respond to Indonesia's independence by sending a diplomatic mission to meet President Soekarno when declaring independence in August 1945. Not only did Indonesia receive support from the Australian government, but Indonesia also received support from the Australian people, especially from the Australian Labor Union at the time Indonesia declared its independence. The Australian Labor Union also participated in a boycott of 599 merchant

ships from the Netherlands that would transport the Dutch colonial government to Indonesia.(Wijayanti, 2019)

President Soekarno even nominated Australia to represent Indonesia in a high-level diplomatic mission (UN) during the Indonesian independence revolution (1945–1949). As a result, Indonesia's independence was recognized internationally in 1949. But the warm sentiment of the past does not guarantee a harmonious relationship between Australia and Indonesia. As an illustration, when there was a conflict between Indonesia and the Commonwealth of Malaya (Malaysia), Australia intervened and supported Malaysia. In North Kalimantan, the Australian military that at the time openly supported Malaysia engaged in fighting with the Indonesian military.(Wijayanti, 2019)

The 1976 East Timor integration incident emerged as a significant issue affecting Australia-Indonesia relations. Conflict arose in East Timor between various political factions after the expulsion of the Portuguese from their former province in 1975. East Timor was united with the Republic of Indonesia in 1976 after the Indonesian Army conquered the territory in December 1975. The Australian public and media focused on the debate that took place in Australia when five Australian journalists died there in 1975. Australia negotiated and signed the Timor Gap treaty in 1979, thereby recognizing Indonesia's sovereignty over East Timor. The Timor Gap Agreement is an agreement made by Australia and Indonesia, signed by Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans and Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas on December 11, 1989. The agreement addresses the natural resources at the bottom of the Timor Sea claimed by Australia and Indonesia.

With the exception of the Timor Leste issue, international relations between Australia and Indonesia have had ups and downs since President Suharto's dictatorship was overthrown by reforms in 1998. After the reform in 1998, Indonesia underwent democratization. However, this has led to a number of problems that have hampered the country's domestic politics, including the issue of East Timor's independence from Indonesia, which forced the Australian government to strengthen relations with Indonesia in order to gain its independence. The Australian government's improved bilateral relations with Indonesia are a result of sovereignty.

The problems between Indonesia and Australia do not end there. After 1998, there were a number of significant incidents affecting both countries. One example is the case of illegal immigrants from the Middle East in 2001. Australia rejects the arrival of immigrants from the Middle East and says the problem is the responsibility of Norway and Indonesia. The statement strained the foreign relations of Australia and Indonesia. Australia does not seem to want to suffer losses if it accepts Middle Eastern immigrants in its country. (Indriani, 2011)

Another example is the Bali bombing incident on October 12, 2002, which resulted in the death of 88 Australians in Bali. As a result, to combat the threat of terrorism that emerged at the beginning of the decade, Australia and Indonesia continue to fortify their collaboration, particularly in the security and military domains. After the Bali bombings, the two countries' main focus shifted to fighting terrorism, which became a common enemy. Cooperation in the war on terror was initiated by US President George W. Bush Jr. and has resulted in military cooperation between the two countries.

Foreign relations between Indonesia and Australia experienced a fairly rapid increase when Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was elected President of Indonesia in 2004. In December 2004, Indonesia was hit by the Aceh Tsunami disaster and Australia provided humanitarian assistance of 34.4 million US dollars through *AIPRD (Australia-Indonesia Partnership for Reconstruction and Development)*. President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono visited Australia on April 3, 2005 and produced the "*Joint Declaration on a Comprehensive Partnership*" which is the rule of cooperation between the two countries in the fields of economy, politics, socio-culture, and security. This declaration also discusses cooperation in the field of transnational

crime so that the two countries can develop stronger cooperation in other fields including police, customs, immigration to engineering agents.

Foreign relations between Indonesia and Australia depend on the political dynamics of both. There is an assumption that Australia wants Indonesia to become a stable and prosperous country, but Australia also does not want Indonesia to become a dominant country in the Southeast Asian region. This assumption is evidenced by the tense relations between the two countries in November 2013. At that time, Indonesia and the international world were shocked by the news that Australia had intercepted a number of senior Indonesian officials. The incident was first reported by the Guardian newspaper and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC). The incident was revealed by former US Defense Agency contractor Edward Snowden. According to the State Intelligence Agency (BIN), the wiretapping occurred between 2007 and 2009. According to British and Australian media, the wiretapping lasted for 15 days in 2009. Australia tapped the mobile phones of the then Indonesian president, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, and several other Indonesian government officials while attending the G20 summit in London. Australia's purpose in conducting this wiretapping was to spy on the conversations of senior Indonesian officials and obtain information for Australia's political interests, as Australia was seeking a seat on the UN Security Council at the time. (Salehun & Sulaiman, 2019)

Profit and loss for Indonesia against espionage carried out by Australia to Indonesia

The espionage carried out by Australia against Indonesia had indeed strained diplomatic relations between the two countries. From the incident, Indonesia not only suffered losses but also gained several benefits. The relationship of friendship and cooperation between Indonesia and Australia has become closer in various fields after this incident. Many cooperations, especially in the economic and military fields that were previously suspended, can be resumed and there are even several new collaborations in the social, cultural and educational fields. Another advantage is Indonesia's increased cyber security awareness of other countries, especially Australia, so that it can strengthen the national security system. Indonesia has learned and warned that Indonesia's national security system is quite weak.

There are also several losses experienced by Indonesia. First, the leakage of important information owned by the Indonesian state. Each country has its own interests in various fields. The actions taken must have a certain purpose to fulfill their national interests which are secret for a country. Indonesia has important and confidential state information that should be of national interest. A number of important information was leaked due to Australia's wiretapping of Indonesia. One such document is a confidential document published by Guardian Australia, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, and The Sydney Morning Herald. This document states that the Australian Department of Defence's secret slides became the basis for Australia's eavesdropping on Indonesia. The six slides in Slides that Australia has tapped are: (Saputra, 2020)

1. President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono
2. First Lady Kristiani Herawati or Ani Yudhoyono
3. Vice President Boediono
4. Former Vice President Jusuf Kalla
5. Former Presidential Spokesperson for Foreign Affairs Dino Patti Djalal who is now the Indonesian Ambassador to the United States
6. Former Presidential Spokesperson Andi Mallarangeng
7. Former Minister of State Secretary Hatta Rajasa who is now the Coordinating Minister for the Economy
8. Former Coordinating Minister for the Economy Sri Mulyani Indrawati who is now the Director of the World Bank

9. Former Minister of Koor. Politics, Law and Human Rights Widodo AS
10. Former Minister of State for SOEs Sofyan Djalil.

Name/Position	Handset	Generation
1 Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono	Nokia E90-1	3G
2 Kristiani Herawati (First Lady)	Nokia E90-1	3G
3 Boediono (new Vice President)	Blackberry Bold (9000)	3G
4 Yusuf Kalla (former Vice President)	Samsung SGH-Z370	3G
5 Dino Patti Djalal (Foreign Spokesman)	Blackberry Bold (9000)	3G
6 Andi Mallarangeng (Domestic Spokesman)	Nokia E71-1	3G
7 Hatta Rajasa (State Secretary)	Nokia E90-1	3G
8 Sri Mulyani Indrawati (MENKO EKON)	Nokia E90-1	3G
9 Widodo Adi Sucipto (MENKO POLKAM)	Nokia E66-1	3G
10 Sofyan Djalil (Minister + Confidant)	Nokia E90-1	3G

Figure 2.2 List of names and brands of mobile phones that are tapped
Source: Manado Tribune 2013

The ten names of Indonesian state officials are displayed in order. Also listed are the types of mobile phones used by the above state officials. Presidents Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, Ani Yudhoyono, Sri Mulyani, Hatta Rajasa, and Sofyan Djalil in 2009 all used Nokia E90-1 mobile phones. Dino Patti Djalal and Boediono use a BlackBerry Bold 9000. Former Vice President Jusuf Kalla wears a Samsung SGH-Z370 cellphone. Andi Mallarangeng uses Nokia E71-1, and Widodo AS uses Nokia E66-1. At that time, all of the phones above had 3G network technology. (Saputra, 2020)

The second loss is the decline in good relations and trust of the Indonesian state to the Australian state. Every country must have different relationships between other countries that can change due to certain causes. In this case, for example, Indonesia and Australia, which initially had some diplomatic cooperation in the field of defense and security, made Indonesia decide because it did not trust it anymore, thus making the good relations that had been built collapse. This was clarified during a demonstration of the Indonesian people in front of the Australian Embassy demanding an apology from the Australian government against Indonesia.

The third disadvantage, Indonesia decided to withdraw and dismiss some diplomatic activities with Australia. Indonesia withdrew the Indonesian Ambassador to Australia, Nadjib Riphath, in Canberra and summoned the Australian Ambassador to Indonesia Greg Moriarty to provide information on this espionage incident. Furthermore, Indonesia reviewed Indonesia-Australia cooperation and even temporarily suspended several important cooperation. Some of the cooperation between the two countries that was stopped by Indonesia were cooperation in intelligence exchange and information exchange between the two countries, the cessation of joint military exercises, and the cessation of coordinated military operation partly or cooperation built between Indonesia and Australia to deal with common problems that trouble the two countries in the maritime area.

The fourth loss gave rise to demonstrations by the Indonesian people demanding an apology and accountability from the Australian government. In November 2013, a group of people gathered in front of the Australian Embassy in Jakarta. The future comes from various circles, ranging from Islamic organizations, workers, to National Defense Activists.

Demonstrators who are members of the Coalition of Hankam Concerned Community Organizations forced the Australian government to immediately formally apologize to the Indonesian government for the espionage incident carried out by Australian Intelligence against President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. In fact, Masa vented his anger by burning the Australian flag.

4. Conclusion

The spread of news about espionage against several Indonesian officials caused different responses between the two countries, namely Indonesia and Australia. Indonesia, which was a victim, made a number of protests by demanding clarification and an apology from Australia. Meanwhile, the Australian government refused to provide an apology and clarification by stating that espionage cases are a natural thing to be done by all countries in the world. Finally, after hearing a statement from Australia that seemed arrogant, the President of Indonesia at that time, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, responded by issuing three temporary foreign policies towards Australia.

The three policies issued by Indonesia include the withdrawal of the Indonesian or Australian Ambassador and summoning the Australian Ambassador to provide information on the espionage incident that befell Indonesia, reviewing the cooperation between the two countries and temporarily suspending some cooperation, and sending an official letter to Australia containing disapproval of the incident that occurred. This response was issued expressly and is based on the inconvenience of the Indonesian Government which feels threatened by the security of Indonesia's national privacy and information.

In addition to the Indonesian Government, the Indonesian people also gave various responses through demonstrations and comments through social media. Several Indonesians protested through a demonstration in front of the Australian Embassy located in Kuningan, Jakarta. Various comments were also expressed by the Indonesian people as a protest against Australia's arbitrary actions on various social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.

Of the three temporary policies issued by Indonesia, it finally resulted in a protocol and code of ethics for cooperation or Protocol Code of Conduct which had previously gone through 6 roadmap processes negotiated by the two countries. The signing of this cooperation protocol and code of ethics is expected to improve diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Australia. This case was well closed marked by the reopening of the Indonesian embassy in Australia.

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