



## Original Article

### Hybrid Governance: The Role of Non-State Actors in the Resolution of the Indonesia-Timor Leste Border Conflict in Oepoli

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#### Abstract:

This study discusses the role of non-state actors in resolving border conflicts between Indonesia and Timor Leste. Non-state actors have significant influence in border communities, both through social, political, and economic networks. They often act as mediators in conflict negotiations, bridging the interests of local communities and governments of both countries. This study focuses on first, what is the role of non-state actors in the process of resolving the Indonesia-Timor Leste border conflict? Second, What is the relationship between state and non-state actors in the context of conflict resolution? The theoretical framework used in this study is conflict resolution theory to see how the relationship between state and non-state actors in managing conflicts at the border both efforts to resolve and maintain peace at the border. This study uses a qualitative method by utilizing a case study on the role of Non-State Actors in the resolution of the border conflict between Indonesia and Timor Leste in Oepoli. This study found that conflict resolution efforts by non-state actors actually have a significant contribution and are more accepted by the community/actors in conflict, conflict resolution sought by non-state actors also contributes to maintaining peace and is a new pattern of approaches in conflict resolution at the border.

**Keywords:** Non-State Actors, Resolution, Border Conflicts

#### Introduction

This study discusses the role of non-state actors in resolving border conflicts between Indonesia and Timor Leste. Non-state actors have significant influence in border communities, both through social, political, and economic networks. They often act as mediators in conflict negotiations, bridging the interests of local communities and governments of both countries. The study covers two things: First, What is the role of non-state actors in the process of resolving the Indonesia-Timor Leste border conflict?

Second, What is the relationship between state and non-state actors in the context of conflict resolution? The theoretical framework used in this study is conflict resolution theory to look at how the interaction between state and non-state actors in managing conflict and stability at the border.

Thomas Risse in his book "Governance Without a State?" (2011), he discusses how governance in many developing countries is not only determined by formal governments but also by non-state actors, such as indigenous groups, civil society organizations, and other informal actors. This approach emerged in response to the traditional understanding that saw government as something that was completely controlled by the state. In reality, especially in areas with limited state capacity, the system of government is often the result of a combination of formal structures and informal mechanisms.

For this purpose, this study uses a qualitative method by utilizing case studies on the role of Non-State Actors in the resolution of the border conflict between Indonesia and Timor Leste in Oepoli. Data collection techniques rely on observations, interviews, and literature studies. All data collected were analyzed using explanatory analysis techniques. Therefore, the level of technological readiness of the research proposed in this study is basic research with categorization of proof of the concept of non-state actors in border conflict resolution.

This study aims to explain the role of non-state actors based on a case study of border conflict resolution in Oepoli, East Nusa Tenggara. The focus of the study is placed on efforts to understand the resolution of border conflicts by non-state actors. In the study of international border conflicts, in general, most of the research conducted focuses on the role of state actors where the resolution of conflicts that occur involves military force through the State security control approach. Thus, the unit of analysis is the state as a single actor. The elements of society involved in conflict resolution are rarely discussed, as they are considered part of the causes of border conflicts. Similarly, in the study of border conflicts in Indonesia, the issues raised are more conflicts between countries at the level of diplomacy and the level of military force placement at the border. Therefore, the results of this study can be useful to be a new study of theories about border conflicts that focus on how non-state actors play a role in resolving these conflicts. In this case, the key/main actors are local border residents (civilians) and elements in it such as non-state actors (traditional leaders, religious leaders and so on). Thus, the dispute resolution process does not only involve state actors, but also elements of society, in this case non-state actors/traditional leaders. Based on the above problems, this paper focuses on two main questions. First, how to analyze the conflict between residents that occurred on the border of North Central Timor Regency, Indonesia with Oecussi District, Timor Leste. Second, how are the efforts to resolve the conflict that have been carried out. In the study of international border conflicts, the most common research is the conflict that occurs between countries involving military power. Thus, the unit of analysis is the state as a single actor. The elements of society involved in conflicts are rarely discussed, as they are usually not directly involved (as combatants) in border conflicts. Similarly, in the study of border conflicts in Indonesia, the issues raised are more conflicts between countries at the level of diplomacy and the level of military force placement at the border. Therefore, the results of this research can be useful to be a new study on theories about border conflicts where the main actors are local border residents (civilians) so that the dispute resolution process does not only involve state actors, but also elements of society.

## Literratur Review

Conflict resolution efforts in general are often interpreted as efforts by actors to resolve conflicts constructively by seeking agreement between actors involved in the conflict. According to Vestergaard, conflict resolution includes two main things, namely issues and relationships (relationships between actors). Johan Galtung introduces three approaches to peace in conflict resolution. First, peacekeeping, which is an effort to reduce or stop violence through intervention by mediators, is generally carried out by the military. Second, peacemaking, which is an effort to create political agreements between warring parties, either through mediation, negotiation, arbitration, or consolidation. Third, peacebuilding, which is an effort to reconstruct and develop socio-economic after the conflict to build peaceful social change. With these three stages, it is hoped that the conflict can be resolved to the root of the problem, so that in the future the conflict will not re-emerge.

## Methods

This study is a qualitative research that is descriptive and analytical. The qualitative method was chosen because it wanted to get a comprehensive picture of the conflict that occurred, by exploring and analyzing detailed information from conflict actors and other related parties. The qualitative method was carried out through a descriptive case study focusing on border conflicts between Oepoli-Indonesia residents and Oecusse-Timor Leste District residents. This study uses a qualitative method by utilizing case studies on the role of Non-State Actors in border conflict resolution. Thus, it is hoped that a complete and in-depth description of the conflict will be obtained.

## Results and Discussion

### Sejarah Perbatasan Indonesia-Timor Leste

The early history of the Indonesia-Timor Leste border is certainly inseparable from the history of Timor Island. This is because basically Timor is a unit of islands which was then divided into two colonies of the Portuguese and Dutch during the colonial period. The Portuguese through the 1904 agreement controlled East Timor which was then known as East Timor or Timor Leste, so at that time the Dutch controlled the West Timor. Since Indonesia's independence, this region has been known as the province of East Nusa Tenggara.

Thus, it seems clear that the history of the Indonesia-Timor Leste border is a colonial product, namely the territorial dispute between the Portuguese and the Dutch which then gave birth to an agreement to divide the island of Timor into two parts. The island of Timor attracted the attention of the outside world, including the Portuguese and the Dutch, because of the charm of the scent of sandalwood used not only for home furnishings, but also for religious ritual purposes (including in East and South Asia). This relationship with the outside world then plays an important role in determining the future fate of the Timorese people.

The history of the current Indonesia-Timor Leste border cannot be separated from the history of the Dutch entry into the Timor region which then divided this region into two parts, namely Portuguese Timor centered in Dili and West Timor with its capital in Kupang. This division actually took place at the end of the 17th century and was stipulated in a clause of the 1904 treaty. In the context of the territorial dispute, in 1701 for the first time the Portuguese proclaimed East Timor as their colony and at almost the

same time the Dutch also claimed West Timor as their territory. From that moment on, the boundary between West Timor and East Timor was actually formed.

Since 1643, Dutch ships have begun to land on the island of Timor to engage in the sandalwood trade. At first, the Dutch managed to sign agreements with a number of local rulers, especially in the Kupang area and its surroundings. In 1647 the Dutch moved the VOC headquarters from Solor to Kupang. The arrival of the Dutch immediately reduced the Portuguese dominance in the sandalwood trade, so that in a short time the feud between the two European nations was inevitable. Since 1566 the Portuguese have built a fort in Kupang.

Conflicts between the Dutch and Portuguese over the dominance of the sandalwood trade in Timor occurred sporadically and continued until 1755, when the two signed the "Contract Of Paravicinci" which divided the island of Timor into two parts, namely the Western part (centered in Kupang) to belong to the Dutch and the Eastern part (centered in Dili) to belong to the Portuguese. Although both have signed a contract, the indefinite stipulation has never been clearly negotiated. The paravinci contract only mentions that Timor was divided into two parts, without mentioning the details of the existing boundary.

Further negotiations in 1846 resulted in a new agreement in which the Portuguese exchanged the territory of Flores (which had been their dominion) for an enclave on the North coast, now known as Oecusse as well as two small islands off the northern coast, Atauro and Jaco. Thus, from then on, the Dutch controlled Flores and the Portuguese controlled Oecusse, Atauro and Jaco. A new boundary agreement was signed in the form of a treaty in The Hague, in 1859. However, the determination of the boundary is not yet certain, considering that the two sides still do not agree on the details of the boundary. It was not until 1914 when the International Court of Justice in The Hague established the "Arbitral Award", that the Dutch and Portuguese agreed on land and sea borders, between Portuguese Timor and West Timor. The borders of East Timor and West Timor were finally fully agreed upon, when on August 17, 1916, the two countries declared their agreement on the determination of the existing boundaries. The treaty does not actually define a demarcation process in the modern sense. This agreement is more about an attempt to delimit the international border in general based on land areas that happen to be under the control of the Portuguese and the Dutch. However, an important thing to note in this agreement is the designation of West Timor and East Timor as separate regions. Article I of the treaty stated that the kingdoms in West Timor belonged to the Dutch and the kingdoms in East Timor belonged to the Portuguese, and the border between the two territories was the international border between the Netherlands and the Portuguese. Meanwhile, article II of the treaty stipulates that the Dutch still control the area of the enclave of Maucator (Calunie) in the area east of the border line, while the Portuguese control the enclave of Oecusse in the area west of the border.

The Dutch-Portuguese Treaty of 1859 also contained the exchange activities carried out by the two countries. Article IV of the treaty, for example, contained a provision that the Portuguese recognized Dutch sovereignty in a number of kingdoms in the Eastern region. On the other hand, the Netherlands also declared its recognition of Portuguese sovereignty in the Kingdom of Moubara (Maubara) and the Ambenu (Sutrana) area which had long flown the Portuguese flag, this provision was contained in article V. In addition, the Dutch also gave Goat Island to the Portuguese as mentioned in article VI. In return, the Portuguese recognized Dutch sovereignty in a number of

kingdoms in the East Timor region as stipulated in Article VIII. Article IX contained provisions for the payment from the Dutch side of 200,000 Dutch Florins (the Dutch currency at that time) to the Portuguese as compensation for the Portuguese recognition of Dutch sovereignty in a number of kingdoms in the East Timor region.

In addition to the aforementioned treaties, the Netherlands and Portugal also made other conventions containing matters relating to the borders of East Timor and West Timor. The convention, called "Convention to Regulate the most Favourable conditions for the Development of Civilization and Trade in the Dominions on the Solor and Timor Archipelago and the Relevant Declaration", was signed in Lisbon, namely on June 10 and July 1, 1893 respectively and ratified on January 31, 1994. Article I of the convention states the importance of demarcation, which is as follows:

"In order to enable them to exercise their sovereignty rights, the Higher contracting parties deem it necessary to establish the demarcation of their dominions on the island Timor in a clearer and more accurate manner, and to do awl with the existing enclaved territories"

Meanwhile, article II of the convention explains the process of demarcation of Timor Island which will be carried out by forming a joint expert commission, which is tasked with formulating demarcation proposals that will be mutually agreed upon by the parliaments of each country. Article VII provides for the possibility of arbitration, if the two parties do not succeed in reaching an agreement on the determination of the boundary line and the possible inter-colonial issues in Timor. If that happens, an arbitration commission will soon be set up consisting of a balanced number of people elected by the high institutions in the Netherlands as well as the Portuguese.

The provisions on arbitration were further set out in another agreement, namely "an agreement exchange of diplomatic notes regarding the composition of any arbitral commission to which recourse may be required throughout the period of validity" which was made on February 9, 1895. This diplomatic memorandum expressly states that if the two parties fail to reach an agreement on a certain matter, then a decision must be made through a "joint agreement" to appoint a third arbitrator who in turn is in charge of making decisions.

A series of settlement processes between the Netherlands and Portugal continued in 1898 and 1899 when the two countries reached an agreement on the determination of the boundary line in almost all the disputed areas. There is an enclave that has not been successfully agreed, namely the Oecusse enclave which until now is still in a state of status quo under Portuguese rule. There was unrest among local leaders in the eastern part of Oecusse, which led to parts of the area not being surveyed until 1899. Apart from the region, the two countries agreed to hold a Summit in The Hague on June 23, 1902. On July 3, 1902, the delegates succeeded in formulating a draft treaty for approval by each country. Thus, on October 1, 1904, a joint convention "A Convention for the Portuguese and Dutch Dominions on the Island of Timor" was signed by both parties in The Hague, which was then followed by a simultaneous ratification process (by the Portuguese and Dutch sides) on August 29, 1908.

There are several important things regulated in the 1904 convention. Article I states that the Dutch ceded their sovereignty in the Maucatar enclave area (East Timor) to the Portuguese. Meanwhile, article II states that in return the Portuguese territory of central Timor, Tahakay and Taimiru Ailala, to the Dutch. In addition, the Portuguese also ceded their sovereignty in the southern part of Oecusse, namely Noemuti, to the



Dutch. Article III regulates in detail the delimitation in the Oecusse enclave area. At the end of this article, it is stated that in the northeastern part of the border (an area that has not had time to be surveyed in 1898-1899) the boundary will be measured and marked out on the territory at the earliest possible opportunity. The 1904 Convention was then considered a legal treaty that resolved various differences around the border issue between the Netherlands and Portugal, especially on the island of Timor. However, until a few years later some areas that had not had time to be surveyed (including the Oecusse area) were still busy being discussed by a special team formed by the two States in June 1909, for example a border commission set up by the Dutch and Portuguese governments arrived in the eastern part of the Oecusse enclave with the task of measuring and determining the boundaries.

But they failed to reach an agreement in determining the boundaries, especially in the areas mentioned in Article III of the 1904 convention. The team has also surveyed the Noel Meto river area, but the determination of the boundary has not been successful. One of the reasons is the topography of the cliff riverbank, so it does not allow the team to go into the river. So what they can do is to put a boundary on the edge of the river.

Failure to set a demarcation then brought the Netherlands and Portugal to the International Court of Justice. On April 3, 1913. The two countries signed a convention containing their agreement to bring this border dispute case to the Permanent Court of Arbitration in Paris. In its decision on 26 June 1914, this arbitral tribunal decided to win the Dutch claim to the disputed territories. Thus, the West Timor-East Timor border was established through a series of conventions that involved not only the Dutch and the Portuguese, but also a third party, namely the Court of Arbitration based in Paris.

In addition, it appears that the determination of the border between the two countries in the colony is a long process that takes a long time. The length of the process has caused its own problems. Some parts of the border area (especially those that concern the riverbanks) have undergone various topographical changes, as a result of natural factors. In addition, some marker stakes used in the previous measurement, turned out to be unable to be used in the next measurement because they were lost or buried in the soil. Not to mention the issue of customary exchange of land carried out by residents on cultivated land, which makes it more difficult to rigidly implement the boundary line in accordance with the 1904 convention.

When East Timor became one of the provinces of the Republic of Indonesia (1976-1999), the issue of the border between West Timor and East Timor became irrelevant. The border issue has never been a major subject of conversation again. In addition, the construction of various public facilities around the border area by the Indonesian government, such as intercity terminals, traditional markets, schools and health centers, has made the people of West and East Timor more free to move without having to worry about the border line. Thus it appears that during the time of Indonesian rule in East Timor, borders were not a relevant subject to be discussed either at the local or central levels.

However, since the independence of East Timor in 2002, the issue of borders has become an important matter to be discussed between the two countries. The first step taken before East Timor's independence was to re-agree on the boundary that once existed between West Timor and East Timor. Thus, on February 2, 2002, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Hasan Wirayuda, and the head of UNTAET, Sergio Vieira de Mello, signed an agreement to regulate the principle of *Uti Possidetis*

Juris, which is to use the 1904 convention that had been signed by the Dutch and Portuguese sides and the results of the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration (Permanent Arbitration Awards) 1914, as the legal basis that governs the Indonesia-Timor Leste border. The agreement was signed by two important officials representing Indonesia and the United Nations in Denpasar, Bali. Furthermore, the Indonesian and Timor-Leste sides agreed to form a joint team, to identify several changes in the border area, including the loss of border markers, topographic changes in the border area and the exchange of rolls carried out by the local community, and then adjust them to the current situation as crystallized in the Provisional Agreement of April 8, 2005 (PA-2005). The joint border commission of the Republic of Indonesia and Timor Leste is also tasked with delimitation and demarcation of maritime borders, which is not mentioned at all in the 1904 convention or the 1914 Permanent Arbitral Awards.

So far progress has been made with the two countries signing a Provisional Agreement on land borders on April 8, 2005, and signed by Indonesian Foreign Minister Hasan Wirayuda and Timor-Leste Foreign Minister Ramos Horta. To date, a final and comprehensive agreement on the border covering land and sea areas has not been reached. This interim agreement agreed on 907 boundary point coordinates, or about 97% of the total length of the land boundary line. There are several segments in the border area that are still hindering the achievement of a final agreement between the two countries, which can be a sensitive issue that has the potential to trigger border conflicts between the two countries.

In reality, the establishment of the RI-RDTL border is actually a product of colonial-era law that leaves various problems. Not all border points were successfully resolved by the Dutch-Portuguese bilateral negotiations and the arbitration process conducted by international courts, but also concerning the dynamics in the border area for almost 100 years that made the agreement create various technical and non-technical problems, such as changes in the geographical contours of border markers (rivers, hills and others), land buying and selling (right on the border line), as well as population displacement. The existence of competition between the Dutch and Portuguese in the sandalwood trade has made the Timor region an important and strategic region, so as is known the negotiation process for the division of boundaries lasted a very long time.

### **Culture as a Social Adhesive for Communities at the Border**

Judging from the socio-cultural aspect, actually the people living on the border of RI-RDTL (Oepoli-Oeccuse) have the same variety of ethnicities and languages. The tribe that settled in the border area was the Timor Dawan Tribe. In the historical context, the tribes that settled on the border had the same kinship. According to historical speech, the boundary in the Naktuka area or in this case Noel Besi-Citrana used to be a village that inhabited the place. The border became known with the arrival of Dutch colonizers who expanded most of Timor. And from then on the border began to be known. This is also what is then used as a reference by the local community related to border issues. The lack of certainty and firmness of the boundary line resulted in constrained planning for the development of border areas, the existence of this boundary problem caused many negative impacts and various incidents at the border (Naktuka-Oeccuse border) determination and affirmation of territorial boundaries during the colonial era.

Formally, the resolution of border conflicts is already the domain of the central government. However, in the resolution process, it is necessary to involve community

leaders of the two regions who are the heirs of the traditional history in the region. Historically, North Netemnanu Village (Oepoli), East Amfoang District, Kupang Regency and Oecussi District still have blood relations, so if there is a dispute over the state border, the only way can be resolved is through a cultural approach. The local government is optimistic that if the territorial boundary dispute in North Netemnanu Village and Oekusi District is handed over to the Kupang Regency Government along with traditional and religious leaders, then the problem can be resolved in the not too long time. Border crossing activities for people on the border of North Netemnanu Village (Oepoli), East Amfoang District, Kupang Regency and Oekusi District usually use a certificate from the local government. The similarity of cultural customs in the border area is a tool of glue public relations between the two countries, in fact it is an advantage that both countries have if they want to resolve existing border conflicts. The governments of the two countries can embrace non-government actors (Traditional Figures) in the process of resolving the border. One of the opportunities for an approach that must be read by the government in resolving border conflicts is to pay attention to the local wisdom of the people at the border. The reality is politically that the people at the border are different citizens, but culturally they are one. It is the close kinship relationship from the customs side that keeps them in good relations. The similarities in these customs can be seen from the habits of the two communities on the border, for example, performing a joint traditional ceremony before the corn planting season to prevent the possibility of disasters that can interfere with the success of the harvest.

### **Chronology of the conflict**

After officially becoming an independent country in 2002, the issue of the boundary between Indonesia and Timor Leste again became a priority issue. The border area between Timor Leste and Indonesia includes two sectors, first, the eastern sector is Belu Regency and Malacca Regency with RDTL (Democratic Republic of Timor Leste) along 149.1 Km and second, the western sector is North Central Timor Regency and Kupang Regency which is directly adjacent to the Oecuse district which is an enclave (enclave/separate area) of RDTL, along 119.7 Km. Overall the land border of the RI-RDTL is 268.8 Km. This problem the governments of Indonesia and Timor Leste agreed to resolve by re-agreeing on the boundary that existed between the Portuguese and the Netherlands referring to the 1904 Treaty and the 1914 Parliamentary Court of Arbitration and the principle of *uti possidetis juris*. On the agreement, as many as 907 border coordinate points were again permanently agreed upon by both parties.

However, until 2019 there are 3 (three) segments left in the western sector bordering the Oecuse enclave area that have not been completed, namely; (1) the Subina-Oben/Haumeniana-Pasabe segment (un-surveyed segment) is in the area of Bikomi Ninlulat, TTU Regency includes Inbate, Nainaban, Sunkaen, Haumeniana, Nilulat, and Tubu Villages, (2) the Bijael Sunan-Oben segment (un-resolved segment) is in Manusasi Village, West Miomafo District, TTU Regency and (3) the Naktuka segment (un-resolved segment) is in North Netemnanu Village, East Amfoang District, Kupang Regency (Kolne, 2014:3).

The dispute in the Subina-Oben/Haumeniana-Pasabe and Bijael Sunan-Oben segments occurred because the Indonesian people in the border area claimed the disputed territory as their customary land, while what happened in the Naktuka segment was caused by 2 (two) things, namely first, there was a difference in interpretation between the technical team of Indonesia and Timor Leste on the content of the 1904



Treaty. The Indonesian side argues that the territorial boundary between Indonesia and Timor Leste is Noel Besi, not Sako Tuinan as demanded by Timor Leste. Second, there is a claim of the Amfoan people (Loitas-Aomanas tribe) to the Naktuka segment as their customary land. So far, Robby Manoh as the king of Amfoang representing the Amfoan people has met and spoken directly to the Regency, Provincial and Central Governments to assist them in resolving the Naktuka dispute and restoring the customary land of the Amfoang people which is now claimed and inhabited by Ambeno residents.

### **The Role of Actors in Border Conflict Resolution**

Some border areas in Indonesia are very synonymous with local culture. One of them is the social life in the border area of Indonesia and Timor Leste located in East Nusa Tenggara Province, more specifically the border area in Kupang Regency, East Amfoang District, North Netemnanu Village or more commonly known as Pos Oepoli, which is close to communities living on the border. In addition to being loyal to the state, the aspect of the power of local actors also affects life on the border. Almost in some isolated border areas, the role of local forces (Adat) actually has a more significant and real impact compared to the role of the state in this case the government. As for semi-isolated areas, the role of these informal institutions appears to be on par with formal institutions. This condition occurs mainly because these institutions are very close to the community and to a certain extent also determine the activities and lives of the people at the border.

Customary devices have been formed hundreds of years before the republic was founded. Customs are present in all aspects of life, starting from birth, domestic life, social punishment, to building houses, seeking fortune, migration or war. The presence of the custom is considered inevitable, which makes them feel natural if later the custom determines their lives. A number of customary rights of a member of the community will also be lost by itself, if he or she takes the act of moving away from the indigenous community that gave birth to him. This strong traditional role ultimately gives rise to a strong feeling of collectivism. Consequently, activities that are considered against collective "agreements" or "traditions" are highly avoided by border communities. The motive is clear, to avoid being excluded from his community. Thus, the role of customs, which is so strong, causes an irreplaceable attachment between the community and its customary territory and customary territory. Customary has placed the community socially and culturally as part of the network or body of the indigenous people as a whole, which causes them to always feel bound by the traditional bonds. Instead of being detached, the central role of the customary and the locus in which the customary nets operate becomes a necessity of each individual who lives in it. This feeling of fulfillment of needs is what ultimately creates dependency and creates a comfortable area for every individual on the border.

The efforts of various parties to anticipate a sustainable conflict have finally found a peaceful path, where the governments of the Republic of Indonesia and Timor Leste continue to strive in various ways both diplomatically and customarily legal and even international law to find the right solution. At its peak, the two governments succeeded in bringing together Indigenous leaders from the two countries to resolve it customarily through negotiations with the King, namely West Timor (Traditional Leaders of the Amfoang mainland, TTU and Malacca-King Liurai, King Sonbai, King of Amfoang) and King of Timor Leste (Ambeno Sila-King of Ambeno). The negotiation of the boundary dispute between Naktuka and Bijaelsunan Oben which took place at the

Bokos SDK Field, North Netemnanu Village, East Amfoang District, Kupang Regency, West Timor on Tuesday (11/14/2017) raised the theme "Nekamese Asaof Mese Atoni Pah Meto". Present and witnessed the negotiations of the Kings were representatives of the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Anad Widardi, representatives of the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Edi Situmorang, representatives of the Coordinating Minister for Politics and Legal Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Totok, Head of the NTT Provincial Border Management, Paul Manehat, Oecuse District Police Chief, PNTL Super Intendenti Arnaldo De Arojo, Director of Planea-mento, Domingos Maniquin, Chevi Departamento Sociali Adelino Cao, Intellectual, Benikno De Aurojo, Director of Administracao, Jose Anthonio Ca Mada and officials as well as citizens and invitees others from both countries.

The following are the results of the agreement from the negotiations between the Kings of West Timor and Timor Leste regarding the Naktuka Dispute in order to promote peace and brotherhood among fellow Atoni Meto:

First, strengthening the bond of brotherhood in order to preserve the values of customs that have been instilled by the ancestors in the Philosophy of Nekamese Asaof Mese Atoni Pah Meto. Second, support the establishment of peace at the border as has been stipulated in the customary oath by the ancestors and what is expected of both countries. Third, establishing cooperation in order to improve the dignity and dignity of the community in the socio-cultural and economic fields. Fourth, recognize and strengthen the customary boundaries between the kingdoms of Liurai Sila, Sonbai Sila, Beun Sila and Afo Sila in accordance with their oaths. Fifth, the boundary line between countries is not a point of dispute as has happened so far, but rather a social point and a point of brotherhood. Sixth, the results of this meeting need to be socialized to all the people of the two countries. Seventh, encourage the governments of the two countries to facilitate a similar meeting in 2018 in Ambenu, Oecuse district (Timor Leste).

The result of the agreement was signed by the four Kings witnessed by the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of RDTL. With the implementation of the customary meeting, it is hoped that the border dispute can be accepted by all parties, and the most important thing is to maintain the integrity of the territory and re-knit kinship relations between communities in border areas which incidentally have the same culture by carrying the theme/motto of Nekaf Mese Ansaof Mese (one heart one soul).

Every traditional expression is not just used, born from emptiness or even sent down from the sky. It is the creation of a certain ethnic or clan community group, which certainly has a historical and social context. This is closely linked to the experience of a group of people in life together. That experience crystallized well through a long process before reaching its current state. The experience is not owned by itself, but passed on to the next generation with the intention of being lived and owned. By verbalizing such thoughts, they also create one aspect of life that further develops its own cultural value.

Nekaf mese and ansaof mese. This expression consists of two compound words and one connecting word. First, nekaf mese. Mese means one. Ma means "and" (conjunction). Nekaf comes from the root word nekan, which contains the meaning of heart (noun). From the word nekan, the equivalent of another word manekan was created which means to love each other, to love each other in a limited and wide environment. Laat manekan means a place, where there is a life that is dominated by love. The development of the root word is nek'amanekkat, meaning a heart that is used to loving, a heart that loves to love, a person who loves peace, likes to unite and embrace.

Meanwhile, nekaf contains the meaning of his heart, or often called nekne. The consonants at the end of each word point to the possessive sense of the third person. The form nekaf is used as a substitute for another series of words, namely innekan or innekne. Both contain the same meaning, namely his heart. Often consonants also contain the sense of being related to. For example, amaf ainaf which is related to father and mother. If the word is coupled with mese (nekafmese), then it is understood as one heart, united heart. The second is ansaof mese. Definition of the word nekaf mese. Also applies to the word Ansaof which is related to the heart, soul. The basis of the word is ansaon which means heart. Ansaof mese means one soul, one heart.

So, nekaf mese ansaof mese can be understood as living as dead, as equal, as equal as deeds, as one soul as one. Based on this understanding, this expression and view is interpreted as wholei, sehearttung, which means uniting together, united together to overcome life with all its demands.

According to Vestergaard, conflict resolution includes two main things, namely issues and relationships (relationships between actors). Johan Galtung introduces three approaches to peace in conflict resolution. First, peacekeeping, which is an effort to reduce or stop violence through intervention by mediators, is generally carried out by the military. Second, peacemaking, which is an effort to create political agreements between warring parties, either through mediation, negotiation, arbitration, or consolidation. Third, peacebuilding, which is an effort to reconstruct and develop socio-economic after the conflict to build peaceful social change. With these three stages, it is hoped that the conflict can be resolved to the root of the problem, so that in the future the conflict will not re-emerge

## Conclusion

The Indonesia-Timor Leste border area, especially in Kupang Regency, has a strategic role not only in terms of security but also in the socio-economic welfare of the community. The unique characteristic of these borders lies in the cultural similarities that demand a holistic approach in their management. The failure of the state to manage the border area comprehensively can trigger social jealousy, economic-political tensions, and even national disintegration. The complexity of border issues that are closely related to sovereignty and territorial integrity requires the state to have adequate capacity to protect and manage each border area to prevent internal and interstate conflicts.

The resolution of border conflicts in the region shows an interesting phenomenon in which non-state actors play a central and dominant role rather than state actors. Indigenous peoples and local leaders who have strong influence at the border are leveraging sociocultural approaches to resolve disputes, while the state is present as facilitators. The involvement of kings or local rulers in defending their kingdom's territories reflects the dynamics in which state power is weakened in the face of local actors who actively pressure the government to adopt a cultural approach in resolving border conflicts.

The peacemaking process in Oepoli can be understood through Johan Galtung's theory which emphasizes the achievement of positive peace—a peace that not only eliminates violence but brings social justice and structural harmony. Using the Galtung conflict triangle model, peacemaking is carried out through attitude transformation through cultural dialogue and peace education, behavior modification through deliberative forums and the role of the TNI-Polri as humanist facilitators, and the resolution of contradictions through customary diplomacy and cross-border cooperation.

This effort proves that true peace does not depend only on the strength of the state, but is born from local wisdom and the collaboration of border communities that create just, respectful, and sustainable social relations.

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