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BOOK REVIEW

INDONESIA'S DELIMITED MARITIME BOUNDARIES



In case of Indonesia's geographical condition, it goes without saying that with great potentials come great responsibilities to manage. With an overall distance of more than 1900 km from east to west and nearly 80% of its area are sea,¹ regulating its borders especially maritime boundaries will not only affect the integrity of the nation but also protect its natural resources.

Indonesia has started its work to delimit its maritime boundaries based on archipelagic principle since 1957 through the Djuanda Declaration. This affirmation later on was formalized by People's Representative Council with the enactment of Act No. 4 of 1960 regarding Indonesian Water.² In the international level, Indonesian Government has succeeded to continuously accentuate the importance to adopt this archipelagic concept, which was debated extensively

during the negotiating processes of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea 1973-1982.³ The principle of archipelagic state was finally adopted in 1982 by United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and then brought Indonesia to an advantageous position in terms of determining its maritime boundaries with its coastal neighbors.⁴

In relation to above explanation, this book helps us to construe Indonesia undertakings in maritime boundaries by providing constructive analysis on Indonesia current efforts to demarcate its maritime boundaries, describing what Indonesia can do more in improving those efforts, as well as underlining that there are potential maritime boundaries that worth Indonesia's attention.

This book comprises of five chapters. The first one depicts contextual situation of Indonesia related to maritime issues, from the historical background on Indonesia activism in international treaties to opportunities and challenges that Indonesia faces. As the largest archipelagic state in the world, Indonesia has a great fortune of diversity, both in terms of its human population and in its biodiversity. However, there are many factors should be taken into account by Indonesian government such as social, economy, legal and politics in order to bring Indonesia's maritime potentials to the fullest.

The second chapter focuses on explaining and analyzing existing legal basis of Indonesia maritime jurisdictional zones, including disputes relevant to it. Furthermore, the

¹ Patmasari Tri, *et.al.*, "The Indonesian Archipelagic Baselines: Technical and Legal Issues and The Changing of Environment," (presented at the 5th IHO-IAG ABLOS Conference, Monaco, 15-17 October 2008), p. 2, http://www.iho.int/mtg_docs/com_wg/ABLOS/ABLOS_Conf5/Papers/Session6-Paper2-Patmasari.pdf, accessed 6 April 2015.

² Global Security, "Archipelagic Concept," <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/indonesia/archipelagic-concept.htm>, accessed 6 April 2015.

³ Tri, *op.cit.*, p. 14.

⁴ Tri, *op.cit.*, 3.

chapter addresses that Indonesia needs to make revision on its maritime delimitation, like revising Indonesia archipelagic baseline system, which will empower this nation to take full benefit of the provisions stipulated in Article 47 of the 1982 Convention.⁵

The third chapter gives clear details on when and how Indonesia determines its maritime boundaries in chronological way. Malaysia was the first country that Indonesia entered into agreement with in regard of delimiting continental shelf boundaries between two countries. Indonesia then continued to have negotiation to settle no less than 17 of maritime boundaries with its seven maritime neighbors which result in signing pacts with Australia, India, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.⁶

The fourth chapter specifies what approaches and actions that Indonesia is able to possibly perform with its adjacent countries to optimize its actual and potential maritime boundaries. In pursuance of this optimization, there may be technical issues to tackle and challenges to deal with, for example having clearer geodetic datum. In addition, this chapter also examines if China potentially becomes Indonesia's new neighbor in maritime boundaries issue.

The last chapter, which is the conclusion of all previous chapters, affirms Indonesia's political will and outstanding accomplishments in delimiting its maritime boundaries. Nonetheless, more actions are still needed for the betterment of Indonesia, for instances conducting surveys and mapping for demarcating Indonesia terrestrial boundaries.

Despite the fact that this book features abundant elements on methodology and relevant technicalities in delimiting maritime boundaries from the perspective of marine science, this book's contribution is intelligibly to be an unfailing resource for scrutinizing Indonesia's past actions, enlightening current Indonesia's maritime issues, and ascertaining Indonesia's maritime boundaries in the future particularly for readers who does not have prior knowledge to Indonesia maritime history and legal regimes.

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⁵ Tri, *op.cit.*, p. 23.

⁶ Tri, *op.cit.*, p.40.