

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

The White Helmets is the humanity group involved in the civil war in Syria. The situation of Syria since 2011 until 2013 made the White Helmets emerged as the local rescue worker to help the Syrian civilian. When the United Security Council passed resolution 2139 however, it could not be implemented well. The White Helmets tried to do advocacy with their allies to enforce the resolution 2139 and propose no-fly zone policy in order to give protection to the Syrian civilians.

### **A. Background**

Syrian civil war is the sensitive international issue since 2011. The conflict began in 2011 however it still happens until today. The dissolved late of Syrian war create a lot of disadvantage, especially for the side who involved but as the victim. Since 2011 the condition of Syrian Republic worsens time to time. It impacts the total population of the Syrian civilian.

The conflict in Syria can be categorized as a humanitarian crisis. The conflict in Syria can be categorized as a humanitarian crisis. As stated by António Guterres, the United Nations Commissioner for Refugees, “has become the biggest humanitarian emergency of our era, yet the world is failing to meet the needs of refugees and the countries hosting them.” He added that the response to the Syrian crisis had been generous, “but the bitter truth is that it falls far short of what’s needed (The United Nations refugee agency, 2014).”

Based on Humanitarian Coalition, “A humanitarian Crisis is an event or series of events that represents a critical threat to the health, safety, security or wellbeing of a community or other large group of people, usually over a wide area (Humanitarian Coalition).”

Nowadays, the humanitarian crisis is multidimensional and complex. An especially humanitarian crisis that happened in Syria. It was the result of people who intentionally

provoked situations (for example, conflicts, dictatorship). The humanitarian crisis also almost invariably results in immense human suffering, threats, and violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. This emergency situations led to a series of psychological and social changes. These changes gave affect the individual, the family, and the community. They were threatening lives of the Syrian civilian and take the human right of Syrian civilian. Pre-existing protection may trigger a crisis or exacerbate the situation and it affects populations. International law provides protection for the right to the human. The populations in Syria really decrease time to time since the conflict started in 2011.

The Syrian civil war created a lot of damage since 2011. It was judged as spoliation of human right for Syrian civilian. The violation of human rights in Syrian war made the United Nations needed to take actions in controlling the situation. Even though the norm of human right in war situation has been declared by the United Nations such as Geneva Communiqué, International Humanitarian Law, etc. In 2013, when the condition in Syria was getting worse then the United Nation Security Council adopted peace resolution 2139 because the number of discriminate attacks which used the chemical weapons, also attacked by aircraft and also tried to response the prohibition to deliver humanitarian assistance. According to the Resolution 2139 (2014) adopted by the Security Council at its 7116th meeting, on 22 February 2014 articles 3 and 6 (UNSC Resolution 2139, 2014):

On the article 3 reads as follow, “Demands that all parties immediately cease all attacks against civilians, as well as the indiscriminate employment of weapons in populated areas, including shelling and aerial bombardment, such as the use of barrel bombs, and methods of warfare which are of a nature to cause superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering, and recalls in this regard the obligation to respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law in all circumstances, and further recalls, in particular, the obligation to distinguish

between civilian populations and combatants, and the prohibition against indiscriminate attacks, and attacks against civilians and civilian objects as such;”

On the article 6, “Demands that all parties, in particular, the Syrian authorities, promptly allow rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access for United Nations humanitarian agencies and their implementing partners, including across conflict lines and across borders, in order to ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches people in need through the most direct routes.”

The United Nation peace resolution 2139 was violated by many parties. In fact, it was indicating that Syrian civil war involved many actors. It is because some of the factors that made the possibility for external side to intervene the conflict. The conflict in Syria occurred because of some of the factors. Firstly, it began as an effect of the Arab Spring uprisings. Succession uprisings in some of the Middle East countries gave some hope to the Syrian pro-democracy activist. Lack of freedom existed because Bashar al-Assad is inherited the dictatorship by his father Hafez al-Assad as the previous president and the economic woes stimulated the Syrian citizen decided to go down to the street to protest the government.

In March 2011, the pro-democracy protests but the government responded to the demonstrators by heavy-handed force. Hundreds of them were being killed and much more were imprisoned. After the protest incident, anti-government side announced the formation of the Free Syrian Army. It is a rebel group aiming to overthrow the regime. The conflict in Syria descends into civil war because of the violence and the involvement of too many sides.

The conflict is now more than just a battle between the government and the pro-democracy, but it was complicated by Syria’s ethnic division. Sectarian overtones also became a part of this conflict, pitching the country’s Sunni majority against the president’s Shia Alawite sect, and it magnetized regional and world powers. The rise of the jihadist group Islamic State (IS) and other extremist religious group was also involved in

the cause of the civil war. Since 2011 until currently 11,5% of the population had been killed or injured, the data of death tolls caused by the war directly or indirectly reached the amount to more than 500.000 according to the Syrian Centre for Policy Research (SCPR). The world report 2016 of Human Rights Watch reported that the United Nation Refugee Agency (UNHCR) estimated in 2015 7.6 million Syrians were internally displaced and that 12.2 million needed humanitarian assistance. (World Report 2016, Human Rights Watch)

Syria is one of the concrete humanitarian crises in the world today. Since March 2011, Syria became the largest displacement crisis globally. In 2016, an estimated 13.5 million people, including 6 million children, needed humanitarian assistance. There are of them in hard-to-reach areas, including in 18 besieged areas. They need health care, protection support and require water and sanitation, while the children need education support, and most of them are food insecure, while the others need shelter and household goods.

The development of Syria situation has been worse almost by four decades. The Syrian economy has contracted by an estimated 40 percent since 2011, leading to the majority of Syrians losing their livelihoods.

International humanitarian law facilitates the humanitarian assistance as one of the most basic rules and it is applicable to all types of conflict. Based on Customary International Law ICRC rule 55 and in the fourth Geneva Convention article 59 concern in humanitarian assistance:

Customary International Law ICRC, Rule 55: “The parties to the conflict must allow and facilitate rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need, which is impartial in character and conducted without any adverse distinction, subject to their right of control (International Committee of The Red Cross, 2005).”

In the fourth Geneva Convention article 59, “If the whole or part of the population of an occupied territory is inadequately supplied, the Occupying Power shall agree to relief schemes on behalf of the said population, and shall

facilitate them by all the means at its disposal. Such schemes, which may be undertaken either by States or by impartial humanitarian organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, shall consist, in particular, of the pro- vision of consignments of foodstuffs, medical supplies and clothing (The United Nation, 1949).”

After the broken promise of the United Nation Security Council Resolution 2139 led the volunteer to create a humanitarian group and they established the NGOs. Syria Civil Defense (SCD) also known as the White Helmets emerging as the new actor of Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) tries to help the Syrian through on their situation and condition.

They emerged in early 2013, primarily as a response to the indiscriminate bombardment of civilian communities in rebel-held areas by the Syrian Arab Air Force. Since then, it has grown to a national organization of over 2850 volunteers operating from 114 local civil defense centers across 8 provincial directorates (Aleppo, Idlib, Latakia, Hama, Homs, Damascus Country and Daraa). The White Helmet was headed by Raed Al Saleh. The voluntary group saves people on all sides of the conflict especially in Syria - pledging commitment to the principles of “Humanity, Solidarity, Impartiality” as outlined by the International Civil Defense Organization.

Based on the broken promises of the United Nation Security Council Peace Resolution 2139 from February 2014 and violated banning of the resolution 2118 in 2015. It made the Syrian Civil Defense decide to take a role for the advocacy process for the Syrian people with other NGOs unite to advocate UN Security Council to take urgent action to stop civilian attacks in Syria and give clear consequences for violators. They demand the United Nations Security Council to bring it into the Arria meeting to process and expose publicly the indiscriminate attacks towards the civilians publicly and against the violators who attack by any means including barrel bombs or car bombs. In the UN Security Council Arria briefing, the White Helmets was pointed as the

representative of Syrian local NGO to speak up the truth.

Since the situation of the Syrian civil war is getting worse, the Syrian Civil Defense attempts to do some advocacy activities. They want the international community to find its conscience and to use whatever means possible to stop the bombs once and for all. They are asking people to take to the streets to support them. They want to resettle refugees and rebuild the communities they serve.

Syrian Civil Defense wants to act as bridges of peace between communities that have been torn apart in this conflict. Syrian Civil Defense wants to see the ideals of the revolution coming true, free, peaceful and democratic. The existence of Syrian Civil Defense as the rescue workers that helped Syrian civilian knew what are they needed surely. They looked for network and used it also to vocalize the need of the Syrian civilian as the victim. Since the Syrian Civil Defense got the opportunity to show to the world about Syria's condition and advocate the right of the Syrian civilian.

## **B. Research Question**

How had advocacy process been done by the White Helmets in order to minimize the victim of the Syrian Civil War?

## **C. Theoretical Framework**

To answer the research question about how is the advocacy process that had been done by the White Helmets toward the victim of the Syrian Civil War, the writer would like to use the theory below :

### **1. Advocacy Theory**

According to Roem Topatimasang, "Advocacy is actually an effort to improve or change public policy which suitable with their interest." (as cited in Azizah, 2013)

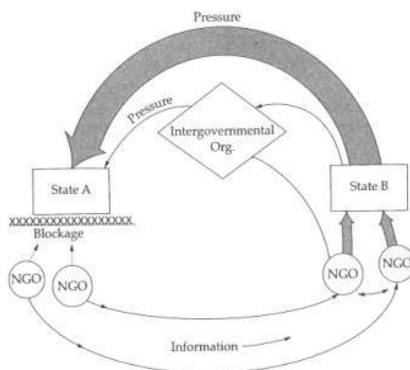
Advocacy theory could be implemented to describe the advocacy process of the White Helmets to protect the

human right of the Syrian citizen toward the violation of human right that happened in Syrian civil war.

## 2. Boomerang Pattern Model

In the case of advocacy on this thesis, there are models that can explain the process of advocacy actors involved in each stage of the advocacy undertaken by the White Helmets. According to Keck and Sikkink, transnational advocacy network includes those actors working internationally on an issue, who are bound together by shared values, a common discourse, and dense exchanges of information and services. Trans advocacy network uses tactics. These include (Keck & Sikkink,1998):

“On the boomerang pattern model, it is explained that when the links between state and domestic actors are severed, the domestic non-governmental organization may directly seek international allies to try to bring pressure on their states from outside” (Keck & Sikkink, 1998).



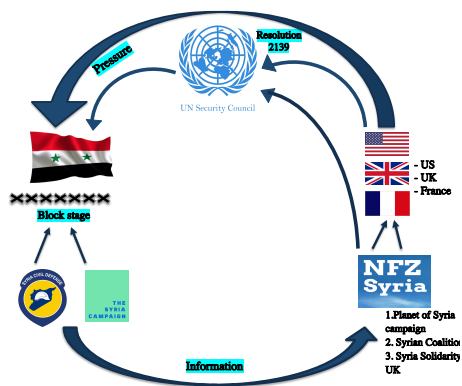
**Figure I. 1 Boomerang Pattern Model (Keck & Sikkink, 1998)**

Boomerang pattern model is one of the models that can be used to give a general review about how the process of advocacy was being run. The actor of advocacy is not just the non-governmental organizations (NGO) but there are other

actors that involve in this process. The NGO that becomes the pioneer in the certain case and they focus on a phenomenon or issue that frequently occur in different locations, time, and society. For example, non-governmental organizations advocating on the human right of the victims of Syrian civil war in Syria. During the advocacy process, the non-governmental organizations get an obstacle from the local government, they may seek the support from the third party that it can come from outside or inside. The third party here acts as a suppressor for the home governments of a non-governmental organization, the pressure can be formed as international norms that related to the issue.

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**Figure I. 2 Implementation of Boomerang Pattern Model**



The White Helmets and their own network such as Mayday Rescue, the Syria Campaign, also cooperated with other NGOs, INGO and some of the countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States and French. Their vision and mission are same promote the human right and peace in Syria. The advocacy process that they do is guided by United Nation Peace Resolution.

The United Nations has recognized the human right as one of the main rights of every single human. It creates an obligation for the parties to respect, protect, and fulfill that value of the right. The White Helmets and Mayday Rescue work with their partner worldwide to protect the Syrian society from the attack.

The effort of White Helmets to do advocacy needed to make international allies with other actors in order to create a network. Since there is no respond concern in protest that had been done by the White Helmets toward Assad regime. The White Helmets made cooperation with other advocacy organizations in outside of Syria such as Planet Syria, Syria Solidarity UK. After some of the protest about the discriminate attacks that happened in Syria, The White Helmets united with other NGOs created No Fly Zone Movement. They called the United Nations to enforce resolution 2139 and proposed No Fly Zone policy as the best solution to protect the civilians.

As the local Syrian NGO, the White Helmets would give some of the information about the current situation in Syria to their partner by certain ways. The White Helmets also created a network with their allies that have the same goal in protecting Syrian civilian. The White Helmets and their allies also asked for help from other actors such as the United Kingdom, the United States and also France. By calling P3 (the United Kingdom, the United States and also France) to support this action because White Helmets with their allies expected that by their power as the permanent members of the United Nations could give pressure to the United Nations. Furthermore, White Helmet also participated in some of the

international discussions or international events and they represented as NGO advocacy group. In the international forum, the White Helmets speaks their aspiration toward the Syrian civil war. The international forum was attended by many participants around the world. It is the chance for The White Helmets to tell the world about what is needed for Syrian people.

Creation of trans-national advocacy network would be a strategy that has a bigger possibility for the actor of advocacy to influence the policy and influence the action of the target. That is why the White Helmets need to do advocacy and make a network to influence the policy of the United Nations.

#### **D. Hypothesis**

The Advocacy Process by transnational advocacy network that had been done by the White Helmets in Syria through:

1. Providing information to the United Nations Security Council and its members about the situation of Syria and Syrian civilian.
2. Developing cooperation with other NGOs and Permanent members of the United Nation (the United Kingdom, the United States, and France) in proposing No Fly Zone policy.
3. With the aid of the United Kingdom, the United States, France, they gave pressure to the Syrian authorities to obey the United Nation peace resolution 2139 and gave sanction to the violators and make new No Fly Zone policy in Syria.

#### **E. Scope of Research**

In this research, the writer limited this research to focusing and delimiting the research by the theme of this research, the geographic location, and other similar consideration. Delimitation is used to make this research better and feasible, it is not just for the interest of the writer but it also could control the writer in this research.

The theme of this research is Syrian civil war. The writer tried to examine the process of advocacy and the actor of this research is the White Helmets (Syrian Civil Defense) as the Syrian local NGO. This research also used limitation of NGO advocacy process time period within 2013 until the beginning of 2017. In 2013, there was a violation of the United Nation Security Council resolution 2139 by some of the parties then the White Helmets emerged in 2017, there is a revision to UN Security Council 2139 about the sanction toward the violator of resolution.

## **F. Research Purpose**

On this research, the writer has a purpose to explain how the White Helmets and other NGOs as a local non-governmental organization in advocate and struggle of Syrian civil society to get humanitarian assistance as their right gave influence towards the United Nation peace resolution and the external power.

## **G. Research Method**

In this research, the writer chose the victims of Syrian civil war as a research object. This issue of the human right of the victims of Syrian civil war becomes important to discuss where the violation that happened to the Syrian people is getting worse time by time and they could get enough assistance as their right. There are still many Syrian people who could not reach the access to get assistance and fulfill their daily needs.

The writer chose Syrian Civil Defense (SCD) known as the White Helmets as a research subject. The White Helmets was established in 2013. The White Helmets is a group of people who are concerned in promoting the human rights in Syria. The White Helmet was headed by Raed Al Saleh.

This research is using a descriptive method that aims to describe the advocacy process of the White Helmets in promoting and protecting human right of the Syrian people. The descriptive method is a method that will be used to

examine a phenomenon, group of people, idea or theory with a particular focus on facts and conditions of the subject.

The writer used the secondary data which were collected from other sources. The writer collected the information and data through reviewing the literature in form of books, journals, articles, reports, conference reports, and newspaper related to the problem.

## **H. Writing Systems**

Based on the question of how the advocacy process that had been done by the White Helmets toward the victim of the Syrian Civil War is, the writer would divide the chapter into:

Chapter I, which contains background, research question, theoretical framework, hypothesis, research purpose, research scope, research method, and writing systems.

Chapter II, which contains the conflicting background of Syrian civil war, who are the actors involved in this issue, and the current situation and condition about victims of the war.

Chapter III, which contains the emergence of Syrian Civil Defense (The White Helmets) as local Syrian NGO. The reason the establishment of The White Helmets and deep explanation about who the White Helmets are.

Chapter IV, which contains explanation about the system of trans-national Advocacy network that has been used by Syrian Civil Defense (The White Helmets) to advocate the victim of Syrian civil war to get the humanitarian assistance as their rights.

Chapter V, which contains of conclusions from the analysis the process of advocacy done by the White Helmets as NGO by using the trans-national network.