

## **CHAPTER III**

### **THE DYNAMICS RELATIONS BETWEEN INDONESIA AND MALAYSIA**

Indonesia and Malaysia are neighboring countries and have a long history of relations, many mutually beneficial cooperation between Indonesia and Malaysia, but also not infrequent conflicts and issues that occur between the two countries. Indonesia and Malaysia often experience several conflicts, including border conflicts and cultural conflicts. In recent years, Indonesia and Malaysia have experienced tensions between the two, especially tensions between communities. The tension is not due to mutual claims of culture or border areas. This tension was caused by the haze disaster that occurred in Indonesia that crossed the national boundaries to cause air pollution which was also felt by the Malaysian population.

#### **A. Relations between Indonesia and Malaysia**

The relationship between Indonesia and Malaysia has experienced several ups and downs. As two neighboring countries, even often called a cognate state, Indonesia and Malaysia have the potential for cooperation and high potential for conflict. Several cooperations have been established by Indonesia and Malaysia, some of which is cooperation in the field of education, Indonesia and Malaysia to establish relationships with students exchange every year. Then in the economic field, many investors from Malaysia are investing in Indonesia, one of which is its investment in the oil palm plantation industry. Malaysia is listed as the second highest ranking as the country of investment or in the last six years of the 2010-2015 period. Malaysia is one of Indonesia's top investment marketing priorities (Praditya, 2016). Also, in the social field, many Indonesian Workers work as

domestic servants, medical officers, construction workers and other professionals in Malaysia.

The increasing progress of relations between Indonesia and Malaysia is an improvement over the problems that have occurred between Indonesia and Malaysia. Indonesia's and Malaysia's tighter relationships do not mean there is no conflict between the two countries. Cooperation between Indonesia and Malaysia does not always work well. On the other side of the relationship between Indonesia and Malaysia which is now closer, there have been many problems between Indonesia and Malaysia. In relations between the two countries often arise issues that cause tension. Between Indonesia and Malaysia, not infrequently the border issue, it can be seen in the case of the Malacca Strait where the water area is claimed by several countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore. The Strait of Malacca is a trade-traffic route connecting the western states with the eastern countries, so this area is a strategic area for trade routes.

Also, the disputes Sipadan-Ligitan Island and Ambalat problems also become one of the issues that have occurred between Indonesia and Malaysia. From these problems, the disputes of Sipadan and Ligitan Islands were eventually won by Malaysia. According to Indonesian researcher Ratna Shofia Inayati, after the Sipadan-Ligitan case won by Malaysia, Indonesia-Malaysia relations tend to deteriorate due to some Indonesian dissatisfaction with the results (Inayati, 2007).

Another problem is the problem of labor from Indonesia, especially illegal workers, has been a long-standing problem in Indonesia-Malaysia relations. Indonesia has sent many workers to Malaysia to work as factory workers or domestic workers. The number of incidents of abuse, sexual harassment, until not paid

salaries by employers, the workers were punished for no apparent reason. This is a problem often encountered by migrant workers especially illegal migrant workers in Malaysia.

The problem of illegal logging has also caused tensions between Indonesia and Malaysia. Indonesia is one of the countries that have substantial natural resource potential, especially forests. Forests are a natural resource that can provide very promising results such as wood, rattan, and others. The problem of illegal logging has long been happening in Indonesia. Many Indonesian blocks of wood were stolen and taken abroad. Malaysia which is directly adjacent to Kalimantan is also considered a "thief" of Indonesian forest products.

Culture is also one of the things that cause problems between Indonesia and Malaysia. The two countries have cultural similarities because it comes from the same family (Rumpun Melayu). This resulted in a cultural dispute that is often done by the Malaysian side of Indonesia. Indonesia and Malaysia have repeatedly quarreled cultures, Malaysia is considered to claim Indonesian culture, and is always followed by protests and strong reaction of Indonesian people who feel harmed because their cultural opinion stolen by other nations. As has been the case, a dispute about Balinese Pendet Dance in 2009. Pendet Dance appeared in the ad 'Enigmatic Malaysia' on Discovery Channel. It provoked the emotions of the Indonesian people. Other cultures that have been a problem between Indonesia and Malaysia are Batik, Angklung music instrument, Kuda Lumping art, Wayang Kulit and Gamelan, Rasa Sayange song, Tor-Tor dance and several other cultures (Kusumadewi, 2012).

Currently, cooperation between Indonesia and Malaysia is getting stronger. This is supported by several things, one of is the increase in trade figures of

more than 21 percent in early 2017. This was conveyed by President Joko Widodo in a press statement with Prime Minister Dato 'Sri Mohd. Najib at the Hilton Hotel, Kuching, Malaysia, on Wednesday, November 22, 2017. Not only about the various cooperation in several fields, in the meeting the President of Indonesia Joko Widodo and Prime Minister of Malaysia Dato 'Sri Mohd. Najib also discussed the border setting that is one characteristic of the Indonesia-Malaysia relations. Another important issue discussed is related to the protection of Indonesian citizens living and working in Malaysia. This is important considering the protection of Indonesian citizens is a priority of the Indonesian government. The Prime Minister of Malaysia stated that so much progress covers the political, economic, social, security, and border cooperation fields. From this, more opportunities and potential cooperation to continue to improve relations between Indonesia and Malaysia (Indonesia-Malaysia Sepakat Tingkatkan Kerja Sama Di Berbagai Bidang, 2017)

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## **B. Relations between Indonesia and Malaysia Regarding the Smoke Haze Disaster**

Relations between Indonesia and Malaysia also experienced problems caused by the haze disaster. The smoke haze that occurred in Indonesia was not only felt by Indonesia itself but also by other countries including Malaysia. One of them is forest fires that

occur due to deforestation and coupled with the El Nino phenomenon which causes drought. The problem of smoke haze disaster from Indonesia not only unsettled the people of Malaysia but also became a big problem for ASEAN because the haze passed across the border to pollute several other countries in Southeast Asia.

Forest fires in Indonesia are among the largest forest fires in Southeast Asia. The handling of forest fires in Indonesia is still limited to efforts to extinguish fires when a fire occurs. For a disaster to be quickly resolved, Indonesia needs assistance from several neighboring countries to deal with the haze disaster that has spread to several countries in Southeast Asia. To overcome forest fires and haze, do not only blackouts but also prevention efforts. And in this case, Indonesia began to open up to receive assistance from other countries, such as Malaysia. Malaysia is one of the countries that received the worst impacts from Indonesia's haze.

Forest fires in Indonesia occur in conjunction with the El Nino phenomenon, which causes drought so that the forest fires that occur are very intense. Due to the vastness of forest fires, haze almost covers some areas including Malaysia. This, of course, results in very poor air quality. As in 2006, poor air quality is spread across 32 areas of Malaysia. And at that time, the Malaysian government declared a state of emergency due to the haze in the area around Kuala Lumpur. Malaysia appealed to close schools and ask people to wear masks. This, of course, affects the relationship between Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. Relationships that occur due to haze may result in the form of cooperation or even the opposite, that is, there can be disputes among countries suffering from haze (Ahmadi, 2008).

According to David Glover's research, Malaysia is the worst victim of Indonesia's haze compared to other neighboring countries. For example, in 1997, Malaysia suffered losses due to the Indonesian haze around the US \$ 321 million. These losses include health costs, mask expenses, fire suppression, cloud seeding, flight cancellations, decreasing tourist numbers, productivity, and decreasing the number of fish catches (Glover & Jessup, 1999). In 1997, Malaysia helped Indonesia by sending 1,200 firefighters to the Indonesian territory to help forest fires. The extinguishing mission was successfully carried out within one month. Most forest fires in Indonesia involve peat soils, and this makes it difficult to extinguish fires. Invalid source specified..

In early October 2011, most of Malaysia was covered in the fog all day. The cause is forest fires that occur in Sumatra and Kalimantan. Fire fires that occurred the day before penetrated into the territory of Malaysia which is directly adjacent to these areas of Indonesia. The Malaysian Meteorological Agency website said the mists enveloped as many as 35 points from a total of 40 spot locations in Malaysia. The visibility limit at these points is also reported below normal (Asap Kebakaran Hutan di Sumatera & Kalimantan Rambah Malaysia, 2011).

Ongoing forest fires, causing pollution of transboundary smoke pollution. For example, forest fires in Riau Province in 2013, are very alarming because they destroy forest vegetation and pollute the environment not only Indonesia but also neighboring countries, especially Malaysia. Indonesia and Malaysia have conducted many discussions and meetings to discuss the haze disaster that hit Indonesia and surrounding countries, especially Malaysia.

In 2013, precisely on 27 June, the Minister of Environment of the Republic of Indonesia, Prof. DR.

Balthasar Kambuaya received a visit from the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Malaysia, Datuk Seri G. Palanivel to discuss the situation in the two countries related to the impact of forest and land fires. The Government of Indonesia has made a considerable effort in tackling the impacts of forest and land fires, as well as efforts to enforce the law. Therefore, from the meeting, the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Malaysia visited Indonesia to invite joint efforts to extinguish forest and land fires in Indonesia. At the end of the meeting, the two Ministers agreed to tackle forest and land fires by collaborating such as information exchange and taking concrete steps to tackle the smoke disaster (Ir. Arief Yuwono, 2013).

By 2015, the haze disaster in Indonesia is the worst of the smoke haze. It invited the Malaysian Ambassador to Indonesia, Datuk Seri Zahrain Mohamed Hashim to speak out about the smoke haze that struck his country. As a result of this situation, his country suffered many losses. The loss is related to the cessation of some activities in Malaysia. Includes education, business and more. The states of Malaysia are also covered in haze. More than three areas affected by smoke from Sumatra and Kalimantan. Also, the deterioration of the smog caused schools to be closed. The smoke-related diseases are also already emerging (Tuwo, Dubes Malaysia Beberkan Dampak Kabut Asap Sumatera dan Kalimantan, 2015).

As long as forest fires in Indonesia occur, the standard index of air pollution in Malaysia reaches a dangerous point. The thick fog that enveloped beside the unhealthy air in the region caused anger from Malaysian society and government. This haze creates disturbance in several areas, including health, transportation, and tourism. The smoke haze makes most Malaysian citizens experience respiratory

diseases such as asthma and ISPA. The haze interferes with the daily activities of Malaysians such as limited visibility and the use of masks if they perform activities outside the home.

Almost every year, Malaysia receives the impact of the smoke haze disaster from Indonesia. This certainly greatly affects the harmony of relations between Indonesia and Malaysia. Relations between Indonesia and Malaysia had experienced tension due to smoke from Indonesia which was blown to Malaysia. Smoke from forest fires in Indonesia is very disruptive to community activities and is very detrimental to health, not only in Indonesia but also in Malaysia.

The problem of smoke haze disasters from Indonesia has disrupted relations between Indonesia and Malaysia. The emergence of this haze problem caused a debate involving Indonesia and Malaysia. Malaysia has repeatedly protested to Indonesia over the export of smoke haze which was also forced to be inhaled by Malaysians after forest fires hit Sumatra and Kalimantan. The issue of haze is a complicated issue because Malaysia and several other Southeast Asian countries also feel the suffering of fires in Indonesia. The influx of smoke into the Malaysian territory caused a reaction from the Malaysian side. The impact that is air quality is so bad that it can threaten people's health in both countries.

In 2013, the air pollution index or API recorded in Malaysia had exceeded 700 with a standard above 300. This shows that air pollution is at a dangerous level. Schools were ordered to remain closed when the air pollution index passed the number 300. Not for the first time, the smoke haze disaster from Indonesia spread to Singapore and Malaysia. In 1997-1998, the air pollution index had reached 860 due to forest fires in Indonesia (BBC, Keadaan darurat



akibat kabut asap di Malaysia, 2013). Indonesia and Malaysia as neighboring countries always try to maintain good relations between the two countries. With this haze disaster, relations between Indonesia and Malaysia are getting tighter. Although it experienced tension because Malaysia did not accept and protested about haze, Indonesia and Malaysia sought to cooperate in efforts to combat forest fires and haze. One of them is the existence of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cross-border smoke pollution.

Malaysia's Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Datuk Seri Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar said the MoU on Transboundary Smoke Pollution if agreed upon it would be able to pave the way for wider cooperation between countries to tackle the annual smoke disaster. Wan Junaidi said that the MoU regulates four things, namely law enforcement in dealing with smoke pollution, the application of the principle of zero burning, management of peatlands, and cooperation between countries in handling smog. The MoU-making agreement was born from the 17th meeting of the Sub-Regional Inter-ministerial Committee in Cross-border Smoke Pollution, in Jakarta, 28 July 2015 (Manan, 2015).

In 2015, President Joko Widodo received a visit from the Malaysian Prime Minister Dato 'Sri Najib Tun Razak at the Bogor Presidential Palace. The visit of the Malaysian Prime Minister was to discuss various matters including the matter of joint handling of the smoke problem. President Jokowi hopes that after this meeting the two countries can increasingly tackle the problem of smoke. The problem of smoke has imposed the lives of the people of both countries. And this is a serious problem because it has a very large impact on the economy, transportation, health, and welfare of the community. During the visit, Prime

Minister Najib stated that Malaysia was ready to assist Indonesia in dealing with this smoke problem (Waluyo, RI-Malaysia Jalin Kerjasama Atasi Masalah Asap, 2015).

The smoke haze that occurred in Indonesia which also hit Malaysia made relations between Indonesia and Malaysia had experienced tension. Indonesia and Malaysia often hold meetings to discuss and negotiate about the haze disaster. Malaysia often sends a protest note to urge Indonesia to overcome the haze quickly. Even in several meetings, Indonesia and Malaysia discussed smoke. Malaysian society and Malaysian media also often discuss and criticize the Indonesian government through social media and television about the smoke haze that has not been completed. Malaysia is very hopeful that Indonesia can quickly overcome the smoke which is very disruptive to the activities and health of the people.

Several years of haze hit Malaysia and Indonesia, making Indonesia and Malaysia have a slight tension. But even so, this haze also paved the way for Indonesia and Malaysia to improve relations between the two countries. In 2015, Indonesia received a visit from a group of Malaysian delegations led by the Federal Region Minister, Datuk Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor. During the visit, Malaysia and Indonesia discussed the haze that hit both countries. Federal Territory Minister Datuk Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor stated that Malaysia would not accuse any party of the haze disaster that attacked Indonesia and Malaysia. The arrival of this delegation group has the aim to increase cooperation efforts between Indonesia and Malaysia in overcoming the haze disaster which has severely disrupted people's life activities in both countries. Malaysian Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Dato Seri Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar added that Malaysia would like

to share about the experience of managing peatlands in Malaysia which might be adopted in Indonesia, and Malaysia is also ready to send back forest fire fighting aircraft (SekretarisJenderal, 2015).

Forest fires in 2015 were among the worst, even leading to tensions in relations between Indonesia and several Southeast Asian countries, one of which was Malaysia. And in 2016, Indonesia was helped by relatively better weather conditions compared to 2015. And this slightly eased tensions and reduced Malaysian protests about the haze.

Forest fires that cause haze in Indonesia affect the harmony of relations between Indonesia and Malaysia. The relationship between Indonesia and Malaysia has gone through many good and bad things. Indonesia and Malaysia have a fairly harmonious relationship, although sometimes there are few friction and conflicts between the two countries. With the smoke haze, Indonesia and Malaysia often hold state meetings and visits that discuss the haze disaster. This shows that the haze disaster not only has a negative side but has a positive side. Indonesia and Malaysia held various meetings to discuss cooperation in dealing with smog. Despite tensions between the two countries, Indonesia and Malaysia continued to maintain good relations by trying to discuss and negotiate the haze disaster that hit both countries.

### **C. The Response of Malaysia regarding the Smoke Haze Disaster from Indonesia**

The problem of haze due to forest fires that occurred in Indonesia is not only a domestic problem. Neighboring countries, such as Malaysia and Singapore, were too tight to breathe in the smoke from the fire. Malaysia is one of the countries that is often affected by haze from Indonesia, even Malaysia. Indonesia often gets criticism from neighboring

countries, especially Singapore and Malaysia, as well as environmental activists who assess the Indonesian government has failed to stop the haze that has become an annual disaster in Indonesia. For the most part, the causes of forest and land fires in Indonesia are burning carried out by certain individuals who choose a quick way to open plantation land. Various ways have been done to overcome the haze. But burning continues. The impact of forest fires is getting worse if the rain does not fall for a long time. Although forest fires occur in Indonesian territory, the smoke reaches Malaysia.

Smoke haze from Indonesia almost hits Malaysia and other Southeast Asian countries every year. So that almost every year, the Malaysian side sends a letter, and this is a common thing Malaysia does every year. In 2013, the smoke haze that approached Malaysia was very severe. At that time, in addition to Singapore and Malaysia, smog also penetrated Brunei and the southern Philippines. In 2014, the sentiment of the Malaysian people towards Indonesia began to peak. This is because the smog from Indonesia was blown to the sky of Malaysia. In 2014 it was not the first year that Malaysia received a haze, but it still made Malaysian society anxious and disturbed (Siregar, 2014).

In Indonesia alone, haze has caused health problems, and namely many residents suffer from various diseases. The smoke haze has also crippled air transportation around the fire location, stopping office, school, and other activities. From this, it can be imagined that the adverse effects of forest fires have indeed troubled the people, not only in Indonesia but also experienced by people in neighboring countries. Fires in Indonesia that occur almost every year show that Indonesia still cannot overcome the haze disaster. And this makes the Malaysian people think that

Indonesia is not serious about managing the forest. Malaysia criticizes and considers Indonesia to be too long to take effective steps in handling forest fires and haze.

According to Fadli Zon, Deputy Chair of the House of Representatives, the government has not yet seriously dealt with the haze problem. The problem of smoke in the Sumatra region and spreading to neighboring countries is an annual problem that has never been resolved. At that time, Indonesia had not ratified the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP), it showed Indonesia's efforts were less than optimal. Even though with AATHP ratification, Indonesia will get technical assistance to handle the haze (Fadillah, 2013). Forest fires that occur in Indonesia are allegedly caused by the burning of land and forests by unscrupulous companies or individuals. And the companies involved are not only Indonesian companies, but also Singapore and Malaysia. And this also invites conflict between Indonesian and Malaysian people who blame each other.

In 2002, ASEAN member countries agreed on the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution. The agreement responded to the smoke crisis when large-scale forest fires between 1997 and 1998 produced haze that surrounded neighboring countries. The smoke crisis occurred in the midst of a severe economic crisis in Asia. Southeast Asian countries had difficulty coping with the disaster at that time. Indonesia is considered to be slow and not maximal about the haze because it took 11 years after the agreement was valid for Indonesia to ratify this agreement in 2014. And up to two years since Indonesia ratified the treaty, Indonesia still has not issued legislation at the national and regional levels regarding the haze disaster, following the rules of the

agreement. Several neighboring countries in Indonesia and ASEAN blame Indonesia for the smoke problem in Southeast Asia. In addition, Indonesia previously caused the formation of the ASEAN Coordination Center for Smoke late due to Indonesia's inaction to ratify the smoke agreement. From this, ASEAN, which has a smoke-free target in 2020, is concerned that the goal will not be achieved if Indonesia does not deal with the problem quickly (Tobing, 2017). This has led many Malaysians to assess Indonesia as being slow and urging Indonesia to act rapidly to deal with the haze which also covers Malaysia.

In 2005, the Malaysian Government declared an emergency in the area around Kuala Lumpur. The smoke haze surrounding Malaysia due to forest fires in Indonesia is getting thicker. Malaysia announced emergency measures due to haze, which is closing schools and asking people to wear masks. In August 2005, about 60 Malaysians rallied to hold the Indonesian government accountable for sending smoke to Malaysia and asking for compensation due to the problem. Previously Malaysian Environment Minister Adenan Satem flew to Medan to meet the Indonesian Minister of Forestry, MS Kaban, to manage the effort to overcome the annual disaster. Indonesia is considered slow in overcoming this haze problem (BBC, 2005).

In 2015, forest fires in Kalimantan and Sumatra were also felt by neighboring countries. Singaporeans and Kuala Lumpur people have been covered in the smoke haze for days from Indonesia, so they have been busy spilling their disappointment on social media. At its climax, the Singapore Environmental Council (SEC) boycotted tissue paper produced by Indonesian companies (Kebakaran Hutan, 2016). One form of protest by Singaporeans and Malaysians on social media is by making #Thanks

Indonesia hashtags on Twitter. It aims to satirize the Indonesian government which provides smog almost every year. The thick smoke haze that surrounds is caused by farmers and or companies in the Sumatra region who burn forests to open agricultural land. In 2015, Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak sent a protest note to President Joko Widodo to voice Malaysia's concerns over the haze. The Malaysian Prime Minister urged that fire suppression measures in Indonesia could be increased so that the haze problem could be stopped immediately (Amalia, 2015).

In 2015, forest fires and haze that occurred in Indonesia were the worst. This invited a response from Malaysian society. One of them was Penang's MCA (Malaysian Chinese Association) Party which asked the Malaysian government to deliver to Indonesia to compensate for losses, in order to overcome the haze problem that hit Malaysia. Chairman of the party, Chew Mei Fun said that Indonesia must compensate because Malaysia has suffered haze every year, caused by forest fires in Indonesia (Gunawan, 2015).

In 2015, a group of Malaysians, namely *Solifromti Anak Muda Malaysia* rallied in front of the Indonesian Embassy in Kuala Lumpur. They protested that the Indonesian Government was considered to be slow in handling the haze from Sumatra. This was revealed by the Indonesian Deputy Ambassador to the Kingdom of Malaysia, Hermono. Hermono said the organization came to the embassy building and also submitted a written statement addressed to President Joko Widodo. The written statement was entitled: "Block the Drains, Stop the Haze" and contained concerns about Malaysians who had to become victims of fires and inhale fumes from forest and peatland fires since the 1990s. The organization said that Malaysians were patient enough and would not

stay silent again. If the Indonesian Government cannot overcome the haze next year, then they will hold a campaign to fight the peatlands. The organization calls for the benefit of future generations in Malaysia, so they are forced to act decisively and encourage Indonesia to seriously deal with the haze disaster (Dewi, 2015).

In 2015, forest fires and haze occurred very badly. This has made Malaysian society and some Malaysian people speak about smog from Indonesia. One of them is the Malaysian media that raised their voices about the haze. Every year smog tests the relationship between Indonesia and Malaysia, as well as several other southeast Asian countries. In 2015, one of the Malaysian media issued its opinion on the haze and the Indonesian government's efforts to overcome forest fires and haze. Media The Star, Malaysia, revealed that in 2015 the same story occurred in 1997, namely the smoke haze. The Malaysian media said that the reasons used by Indonesia had never changed, that foreign companies from Malaysia and Singapore were also responsible for forest fires. But only after 13 years, Indonesia finally ensnared the companies involved. Malaysian media consider Indonesia to be arrogant and suspicious of any assistance offered by Malaysia and Singapore. Singapore, one of the countries receiving the largest haze, had offered assistance but was rejected by the Minister of Forestry and Environment, Siti Nurbaya Bakar. When Malaysia sent 1700 firefighters in 1997, they were always monitored by the Indonesian military for 28 days of blackout (DW, 2015).

Not only the media, but Malaysian Ambassador to Indonesia Datuk Seri Zahrain Mohamed Hashim also spoke about the haze disaster that attacked Malaysia. As a result of the haze disaster,



Malaysia suffered a lot of losses. The perceived losses are due to limited or even stopped community activities, such as education, business, transportation and so on (Tuwo, Dubes Malaysia Beberkan Dampak Kabut Asap Sumatera dan Kalimantan, 2015).

Malaysia's protests and insistence on Indonesia to quickly deal with the haze has intensified as Indonesia still refuses assistance from Singapore and Malaysia to deal with haze. Indonesia has repeatedly refused offers of assistance from other countries. The Singaporean government has offered assistance through the Minister of Environment and Forestry Siti Nurbaya in the form of C-130 aircraft and Chinooks aircraft with the intention of making artificial rain. At that time the government refused the assistance with the reason that they were still able to handle it (Wirawan, Tiga provinsi tetapkan tanggap darurat asap, 2015).

Indonesia is often criticized by neighboring countries, especially Singapore and Malaysia, and environmental activists because they are considered to have failed to stop the annual haze in the region. Forest fires in Indonesia are mostly caused by forest fires to open plantations. Indonesia is considered slow in dealing with haze and forest fires. Forest fires and haze have occurred for many years, and this shows the slow pace of Indonesia in handling these problems. The Indonesian government insisted that it would not accept the assistance offered by two neighboring countries, Singapore and Malaysia, which had also been affected by haze for years due to forest and land fires in Indonesia. In an interview with the BBC, President Joko Widodo confirmed that Indonesia had made a serious effort, mobilizing thousands of TNI and Police members and dozens of helicopters to deal with the fire. (Wirawan, Tiga Provinsi Tetapkan Tanggap Darurat Asap, 2015).

In 2015, the smoke haze that occurred was the worst smoke marked with smoke reaching southern Thailand. Malaysian Prime Minister, Najib Razak, asked Indonesia to take firm action against forest burners and cause haze in the Southeast Asian sky. The smoke haze caused Indonesia to be under pressure from neighboring countries, especially Malaysia. Oil palm and paper companies are accused of being the culprits of this phenomenon. Burning land to plant oil palm and acacia triggers fire in the underground peat layer. As in previous years, the Indonesian government has always promised to stop this annual disaster, but there are no definite steps to overcome it. Continued protests and insistence by Malaysia, provoked Vice President Jusuf Kalla to admonish neighboring countries to thank clean air from Indonesia's forests for 11 months outside the forest fire season (Apriliana, Asap Rambah Thailand, PM Malaysia Desak Indonesia Bertindak, 2015). This is one of the things that increases the tension between Indonesia and Malaysia.

The 2015 was the year when the haze that occurred was very alarming. Even so, at that time President Jokowi had not used assistance from neighboring countries such as ASEAN. Indonesian Ambassador to Malaysia Herman Prayitno said if the Indonesian government could still tackle its own haze. Singapore protested strongly because Singapore was heavily affected by smog from Indonesia. Then followed by Malaysia wrote to President Jokowi who protested against the haze which also affected Malaysian country. Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak wrote to President Joko Widodo to voice Malaysia's concerns over the haze that hit the country. The Malaysian Prime Minister urged that fire suppression measures in Indonesia could be increased

so that the haze problem could be stopped immediately (Chahyati, 2015).

The smoke haze that hit Indonesia and Malaysia led to various protests by the Malaysian side. The protests that emerged did not only come from the government and the community but also the media, as well as the entrepreneurs who protested. In 2015, a Malaysian businessman, M. Gunasekaran, sued the Indonesian government for haze due to forest fires that reached Malaysia. The lawsuit was registered with the Kepala Batas police station, Penang, Malaysia. He demanded that the Indonesian government pay US \$ 100 million or around Rp1.3 trillion. The businessman from Taman Kempas admitted that the haze was very disturbing and caused a decrease in air quality. Gunasekaran confirmed that the report he made was very serious and planned to bring the matter to the International Court of Justice and wanted to sue US \$ 100 million from the Indonesian government. If there are no blackouts, this haze will continue to recur in the following years. However, Nort Seberang Perai police officer, Commissioner Azmi Adam said he could not investigate the report because there was no criminal element (S, 2015). Forest fires in the region of Sumatra and Kalimantan have indeed caused smoke which is very disturbing to life, which reaches Malaysia and Singapore. Indonesia has made several efforts to extinguish the fire. However, efforts made by Indonesia have not been able to stop forest fires at that time.

In 2016, Malaysia again submitted a letter of protest to Indonesia regarding the cross-border smog from Indonesia. This was said by Nur Masripatin, Director General of Climate Change Control at the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, after a coordination meeting controlling and anticipating forest and land fires in the West Kalimantan

Governor's office. A protest letter like that is a common practice for Malaysia every year (Masripatin, 2016).

In 2016, two neighboring countries, Malaysia and Singapore threatened to take law action and bring the issue of smoke to the international chain if in 2016 Indonesia could not overcome the haze. This was revealed by the Commander of the Task Force for Emergency Preparedness of Riau Forest and Land Fires, Brigadier General TNI Nurendi at the Air Force Base Complex in Roesmin Nurjadin Airport. (Tanjung, 2016).

Forest fires in Indonesia cause haze disasters that are very disturbing to various aspects of human life, not only in Indonesia but also to Malaysia and several other neighboring countries. Therefore, almost every year Indonesia receives protests and insistence from various parties regarding the haze so that Indonesia can quickly deal with the haze and not recur. However, the protests received by Indonesia did not help deal with haze. Indonesia has made various efforts to overcome the haze, but the results are still not optimal. Indonesia, which initially claimed to be able to handle the haze itself, asked for assistance from neighboring countries in an effort to extinguish fires in forest fires and deal with severe haze.