

## Securitization Of Terrorist Separatist Groups In Papua: A Study Of Political Framing By The Indonesian Government

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### Abstract

*The escalation of conflict caused by the Free West Papua Movement in the last five years certainly requires handling by the Indonesian Government. In its securitization process, the Government started with a speech act by labelling this pro-independence group as a Terrorist Separatist Group. Using a political framing perspective, the aim of this paper can be achieved using four main analytical components: the focus of strategic actors, the actor's decision to be positive or negative, and the actions taken by the actor, whether to be offensive or defensive. Finally, the final component will be taken by analyzing these three components: the substantive framework for following up on this securitization effort. This research uses a securitization and political framing perspective with a qualitative approach using primary and secondary data. It concludes that after framing is carried out, the Government needs to formulate a serious substantive framework with a more inclusive approach, considering aspects of justice and human rights and evaluating existing framing to achieve a peaceful solution for all parties involved. The Government also needs to open further discussions regarding the root of the problem and provide treatment according to it. The results obtained can be useful for political scientists, regional and national governments, and the wider community in understanding the*

*direction of Indonesian government policy regarding handling security in Papua.*

**Keywords:** *Indonesian Government, Papua, Political Framing, Securitization, Terrorist Separatist*

## **Introduction**

Papua Province in Indonesia has a long history of occupation by many nations. The first occupation began when Europeans from Portugal discovered the island of New Guinea in 1511. After that, the island of Papua experienced many phases of being occupied by Spanish, Dutch, German, and British explorers. In 1924, the people of Java (which is also part of today's Indonesia) first arrived in Papua as communist prisoners during a rebellion in Java. Meanwhile, during World War II, Japan also occupied parts of Papua, and the Dutch regained Papuan sovereignty at the end of World War II. In 1962, Papua was even placed in the UN administrative area and then in 1963, it became part of Indonesia (Gorlinski, 2024).

Integrating Papua into Indonesia takes a long time and has a complicated flow. Historically, the Papua region was part of Indonesia because it was a Dutch colony like the other Indonesian islands (Ministry of Communication and Information, 2015). The long and drawn-out process of Papua's integration into Indonesia had a significant impact, namely the Free West Papua Movement (Organisasi Papua Merdeka - OPM), born in December 1963. Initially, it was a religious organization that combined traditional beliefs with Christianity, formed by the head of the Demta district, Aser Demotekay. This organization initially only rejected modern life and all forms of development. They were cooperative and non-violent. However, OPM's successor, Jacob Prai, continued the movement with violence because he was influenced by the politics of fighting against each other by the Dutch. Apart from that, the dissatisfaction of the community in Papua with the New York Agreement, which states that the people of West New Guinea can determine their destiny, but then implementation of the agreement is not supervised by the UN, making the OPM a resistance organization that continues to voice demands for independence for Papua (Verianty, 2023).

Security problems in Papua, due to resistance activities by the movement, have resulted in many casualties from civil society groups, the Indonesian Republic Police (Polri), to the Indonesian National Army (TNI). Several recent cases include the case of detaining dozens of teachers and medical personnel (Amindoni, 2018), the shooting of the Trigana Air Twin Otter plane chartered by the National Police Mobile Brigade (BBC News, 2018), and the attack on the Trans Papua Road contractor (BBC News, 2018b).

The Government understands that OPM's demands for independence from Indonesia are

due to the long history of annexing Papua by various nations. OPM believed that they had not received the justice that other provinces in Indonesia had. For this reason, the Government has made full efforts to provide justice and restore the Papuan people's trust in Indonesia. One of the serious efforts taken after the Reformation was President B.J. Habibie invited 100 representatives of Papuan community leaders to Jakarta to listen to their aspirations on February 29, 1999, which later gave birth to Law no. 21 of 2001, concerning Special Autonomy for Papua Province (Majelis Rakyat Papua, 2023).

In general, Law No. 21 of 2001 explains that the Papuan people have the right to enjoy the results of development fairly by administering Government and implementing development that fulfils a sense of justice and achieves the welfare of the people. Management and utilization of Papua Province's natural wealth will also be used optimally to improve the standard of living of indigenous people, which is based on basic values, which include protection and respect for ethics and morals, basic rights of indigenous people, the supremacy of law, democracy, pluralism, and equality of position, rights, and obligations as citizens. This law aims to resolve the root of Papua's problems following the aspirations of the Papuan people (Safa'at, 2014).

As a separatist organization, OPM has carried out its operations through dialogue, diplomatic channels with other countries, and even armed actions carried out within the country. In carrying out these armed actions, the OPM militia, which is currently known as the Papua Separatist Terrorist Group (Kelompok Separatis Teroris Papua - KSTP) militia, continues to argue that the pressure and struggle carried out is aimed at demanding Papuan independence from Indonesia, to fight for the "injustice" carried out by the Indonesian Government (Azhar & Mambor, 2020). This excuse is considered baseless if it refers to their activities, which also threaten the safety of the lives of the indigenous people of Papua and damage public facilities and private property. The OPM threat continued even after the Central Government granted special autonomy (*Otsus*) in 2002, causing the State to change the OPM status several times according to their actions and the magnitude of the threat they posed. This labelling was done to find the best solution to overcome the OPM threat (BPKAD Papua, 2017).

The latest increase in labelling for OPM status not only as an Armed Separatist Criminal Group (KKSB) but also as a Papuan Separatist Terrorist Group (KSTP) was submitted by the coordinating minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs (Menko Polhukam), Mahfud MD, on April 29 2021, by designating KKSB in Papua as one of the separatist terrorist groups. This political decision was motivated by the threat to national security so that handling this threat could be taken more seriously and require the army and police to play a more comprehensive role.

This labelling has given rise to pro and con reactions from several groups. Opponent groups argue that this determination will only have the potential to violate the human rights of the Papuan people and will foster violence itself (Nurita & Amirullah, 2021). The pro group stated that KSTP must be fought because it has killed many victims in Papua, including the Head of the Papua Regional Intelligence Agency. This separatist terrorist labelling is also important to address the large number of illegal weapons circulating in their hands (Komisi III DPR RI, 2021; Bramantoro, 2021; Hazami, 2021; Putri & Amirullah, 2021). Papuan traditional leaders, together with the Papuan people, agreed to reject KSTP and support its eradication because they have repeatedly carried out attacks on the Papuan people (Tanah Papua, 2023).

According to Intelligence and Military Observer Susaningtyas Kertopati, the determination of the armed criminal group (KKB) as a terrorist separatist group (KSTP) has been carefully considered, and taking this step shows that the Government is ready for the consequences and implications (Rakhmatulloh, 2021). After establishing this status, the Government must seriously build people's trust through better communication. Propaganda and effective, efficient, measurable, and well-targeted counterpropaganda are important to prevent the solution of changing this status from being counter-productive in dealing with the root of the problems.

Giving the terrorist separatist group label to OPM is a form of political framing that initiates conflict resolution in Papua to be more intense to realize national security by referring to Law Number 5 of 2018, that criminal acts of terrorism are serious crimes, so cooperation at the international level is needed to deal with it. This labelling of terrorism explains that the OPM group has a wide and massive network. If it is not addressed immediately, it will threaten national and international peace and security. With the increased status, the state can carry out any means to maintain security (Buzan et al., 1998).

Several previous studies have analyzed how political decisions are taken by countries or international organizations, such as the United States, United Kingdom, and the European Union, in determining whom they label as terrorist organizations based on violence inflicted on the population (Beck & Miner, 2013; Dumitriu, 2004) or based on the behaviour of a group with a certain background (Dewi, 2019). In Indonesia, the designation of the armed criminal group in Papua as a separatist terrorist group has been researched from the perspective of national criminal law, especially from the terrorism law based on indications and elements of acts of terrorism (Pratama & Hafiz, 2021). A study of bounded rationality in decision-making explains the "framing of decisions in international relations" that Government decision-making is designed to lead to bounded rationality concerning behavioural choices and interaction

opportunities and minimizing losses in positions of relative power in the international system (Faber, 1990). Furthermore, framing affects a country's policies. Presidents and important world leaders often use the "war on terrorism" framing to shape policy debates and national security strategy choices (Mintz & Redd, 2003).

In the Securitization study, there is a stage called speech act, an attempt to state who or what existential threat must be secured. Efforts to label and politically frame the Papuan Armed Criminal Group into the Papuan Separatist Terrorist Group in securitization studies can be understood as an effort by the Government as a securitizing actor to initiate securitization steps for the referent object. On this basis, it is important to do this research to understand how the Indonesian Government carries out political framing as a securitization effort for the Papuan Separatist Terrorist Group. As for novelty, the study uses the Political Framing approach to look at this securitization issue in more depth, which previous researchers have never done and can expand the knowledge in this field.

## **Literature Review**

### **Terrorist Separatists**

Terrorism has no universally accepted definition. The term terrorism is not only applied to acts of violence/ terror carried out by states to frighten their citizens or to cause false obedience from citizens towards the state but also carried out by non-state actors. Attacks are usually directed at immediate targets such as people, events, institutions, and broader audiences that the protagonist wishes to intimidate, shock, or threaten (Ashford, 2012; Vertigans, 2015). However, with more specific targets, terrorists often kill or injure non-combatants or innocent people to maximize terror and to seek widespread publicity for their actions (Rapport, 2015).

Terrorism is a non-traditional security threat formed from a causal relationship between sectors from several causes, including poverty, economic injustice, and economic sanctions (Choi & Luo, 2013; Goldman & Noy, 2020). Terrorist movements also emerged along with the development of revolutionary ideologies (Crenshaw, 1981; Fischer et al., 2019), as well as ideological warfare based on religious or belief doctrine of ethnic superiority, all of which intended to defeat Western ideological domination .

Meanwhile, separatism can be interpreted as support for the separation of culture, ethnicity, tribe, religion, race, government, or gender from groups that are more politically dominant. Separatist groups practice a form of identity politics that is based on shared experiences of injustice that befell members of certain social groups. These groups believe that efforts to

integrate with dominant groups harm their identity and ability to self-determine (European Center for Populism Studies, 2023). Separatist groups are often referred to as terrorist separatist groups because the actions they carry out meet the criteria for acts of terrorism. The basic motivation shared by almost all of them is inequality and mistakes in the past, where the state was previously deemed not to have accommodated complaints and managed effective resolution of regions or states (Lefebvre, 2003). Other motivations are injustice, discrimination and marginalization suffered by social or political minorities. The political ideology of nationalism and separatism is rooted in the widely supported ideal of self-determination. It is supported by historical records showing that state independence is not an impossible goal (Forest, 2018). The basic criteria that make a movement categorized as a terrorist movement are that it endangers state ideology, state sovereignty, and state security and threatens human values that include people's lives.

Separatist terrorism is part of political terrorism (Hudson, 2002; Scheider & Davis, 2009). Economic progress and development with the efforts of political leaders to provide and guarantee areas of broad economic and political independence, preserving cultural values and native languages of indigenous peoples is very important to maintain peace and social stability in areas of separatist terrorism groups (Solimano, 2003; Vasilyevna, 2016). What differentiates separatist terrorism from other political terrorism groups is the scope of the movements they carry out, where their movements and the achievement of their goals are only focused on one country. Even behind that, they may have representatives in several regions within and outside the country (Hanley, 2013).

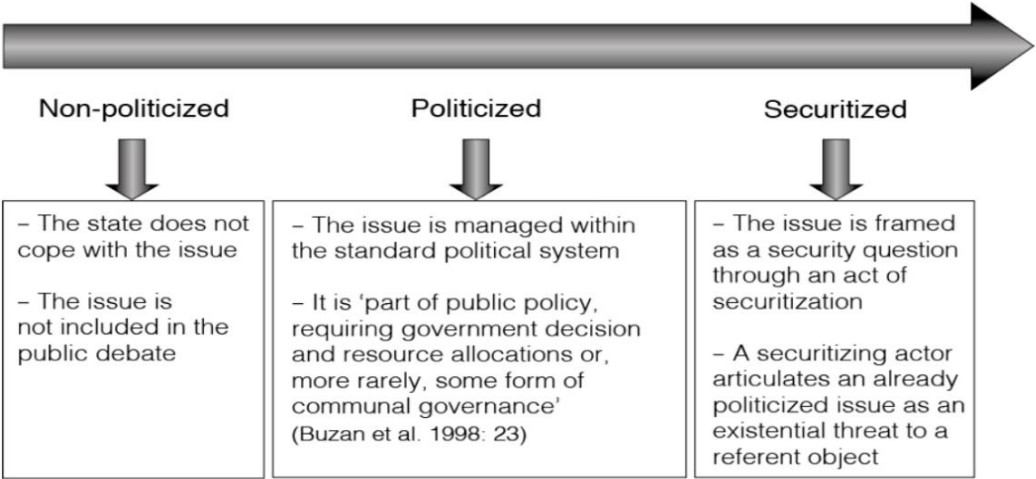
### **Securitization**

*Securitization* is a step taken outside the established rules of the game and framing security issues as a special type of politics or above politics. It is a process and perspective from state political authorities in understanding, perceiving, and implementing a security issue with a high threat category because it is beyond reasonable limits, where political decisions regarding security are taken because of special security threats. Securitization studies aim to understand "who carries out securitization (securitizing actor), on what threat issues, for whom (referent object), why, with what results, and at least under what conditions". Securitization begins with a speech act about a particular threat by an authoritative national leader, institution, or party. The speech shifts the threat from normal politics to a security issue, legitimizing extraordinary measures to address the threat (Lieven, 2020).

Securitization is a process-oriented conception of security instead of the materialist approach of classical security studies. Classical approaches to security focus on the material

disposition of threats, including distribution of power, military capabilities, and polarity, whereas securitization examines how specific issues are transformed by actors into security problems to enable the use of extraordinary measures. In addition, to be successful, the audience must accept securitization actions, regardless of the issue that poses a real threat (Balzacq, 2005).

According to (Emmers, 2018), any securitization consists of a security act (speaking the language of security and requesting the implementation of extraordinary countermeasures) and a political act (a political decision to articulate the threat in such a way as to reassure the target audience). These two components highlight the difficulty in drawing a clear line between politicization and securitization, for example, in cases where political reasons drive the motivation behind securitization actions. However, to simplify the differences between the two, including identifying non-politicized issues in the security sector, describes the emergence of a securitization spectrum, which can be seen in the figure below.



**Figure 1:** The Spectrum of Securitization

In summary, all securitization actions involve five components :

1. Securitization actor: the entity that makes the securitization step/ statement
2. Speech acts
3. Existential threat: an object (or ideal) that has been identified as potentially dangerous
4. Reference object: an object (or ideal) that is threatened and needs to be protected
5. Audience: the target of securitization actions which needs to be persuaded and accept the issue as a security threat

## **Political Framing**

Framing is one of the main theories in research on political communication (Cacciatore et al., 2015). Framing involves the selection and importance of information, including how political events are conveyed by the Government to the media and the public (Entman, 2004) as a frame is like a "photo frame," which functions to place a boundary around something, framing in political framing functions to differentiate an issue from what is around it. Frame becomes a "spotlight" that draws our attention to certain aspects of a problem and distances it from other aspects (Gamson, 2004).

Framing is an activity carried out selectively by emphasizing or evaluating certain aspects of perceived reality and making them more prominent in the communicated narrative. Framing can promote the definition of a particular problem, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, or recommendations for solving problems for certain things that are explained in such a way. In other words, framing means actively constructing the meaning of the reality in question (Entman, 1993) with certain language capable of shaping respondents' perceptions of the world and their environment (de Bruijn, 2019).

Political rhetoric uses framing to present the facts surrounding a problem to create the appearance of the problem being faced and requiring a solution. Politicians use framing to create solutions to things that seem most important and appropriate compared to those carried out by the opposition (van der Pas, 2013). Framing refers to how people develop a particular conceptualization of a problem or reorient their thinking about an issue (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

There are four types of choices involved in strategic framing. First, strategic actors must decide whether they want to focus on the process or the substantive content of the debate – on politics or policy. Second, they must choose between being positive or negative. Third, they must decide whether to take an offensive or defensive stance. Of course, they can also choose any combination concerning these first three options. Finally, and most importantly, political actors must choose one or more substantive frames capable of directing media and public attention toward their own goals and away from their opponents (Hänggli & Kriesi, 2010).

## **Research Method**

This article related to the securitization of the Papuan Separatist Terrorist Group with a study of political framing carried out by the Indonesian Government is based on the perspective of securitization as a non-traditional security approach in looking at the Indonesian Government's efforts to deal with the never-ending separatist conflict in Papua which affected



the human security from both civil society and the military; as well as to state infrastructure and the sovereignty of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. In securitization, there are three main spectrums in looking at turning an issue into a security issue: non-politicized, politicized, to securitized. Speech acts in the form of political framing carried out by the Indonesian Government are a politicized stage in dealing with the increasing threat from the Terrorist Separatist Group. The author uses a qualitative approach and uses primary and secondary data. A focused qualitative approach relies on an in-depth analysis of a phenomenon and goes down to the root of the problem. Qualitative studies attempt to construct reality and understand its meaning. Thus, qualitative research usually emphasizes processes, events, and authenticity. To increase the validity of the analysis and avoid plagiarism, the author uses theories obtained through secondary data. Primary data was obtained through direct field observations, interviews and based on official state documents. Secondary data is data obtained through people conducting research from existing sources. The secondary data contained in this article mainly comes from books, journals, and news portals.

## **Results And Discussion**

### **The History Of The Papuan Terrorist Separatist Movement And The Role Of The Indonesian Government In Papua**

The separatist movement in Papua began during the Dutch colonial era until the process of integrating Papua into Indonesia through the Determination of Popular Opinion (Penentuan Pendapat Rakyat - Pepera). This agreement stated that Papua was integrated with the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia on July 14, 1969. Some parties do not believe in the results of this Pepera because the voting process does not follow the initial agreement. Initially, it was stated that the vote obtained through a referendum involved all Papuan people's votes. It then became a meeting of the council of elders, which only involved 1,022 tribal chiefs and traditional elders selected by the Indonesian Government. The result of the meeting was that all the council of elders agreed that Papua would become integrated into Indonesia. Some parties claim that the Papuan people do not agree with these results and have genuine rights to the Papua region because of different customs and cultures from Indonesia.

Nicolas Jouwee, one of the founders of the Free Papua Organization (OPM), stated that the push to separate Papua from Indonesia did not arise purely from the willingness of the Papuan people. Through the politics of ethnic division, the Dutch helped indoctrinate the Papuan people that they were different from the Javanese and Malays so that Papua would be

hostile to Indonesia (McGibbon, 2004). When the Dutch succeeded in inciting the Papuan people, the Dutch promised Papuan independence by encouraging the Papuan people to have armed forces. OPM was founded in 1963 on a Dutch plan to separate Papua from Indonesia. Initially, this organization was a missionary organization aiming to spread religion. However, to carry out the plan, the Dutch encouraged them by asking Papuan independence fighter figures from Indonesia to become Dutch citizens. Thus, the existence of the OPM as a national separatist movement cannot be separated from Dutch plans and efforts. With the OPM as an armed militia force, the Netherlands would have a chance to maintain its position in Papua.

As a Dutch product, OPM not only carries out acts of aggression but also through diplomatic efforts. OPM carries out the Morning Star flag ceremony and acts of terror in Papua. The first armed and rebellious movement was carried out by the OPM on July 26 1965, led by Sergeant Major Permanes Ferry Awom, a former member of the Papuan Vrijwilligers Korp or Papuan volunteer battalion formed by the Dutch (Djopari, 1995). The OPM has continued to grow in recent years due to claims of widespread dissatisfaction with the Jakarta administration and numerous examples of injustice and human rights violations committed by the Indonesian Government, including the murder of Papuan independence supporters. Benny Wenda is the most prominent figure in this separatist struggle; he led the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP).

Even though it appears as one unit, since its inception, the Papuan separatist movement has been divided into many groups. These groups were initially quite organized in one forum known as the Free Papua Organization (OPM), with the West Papua National Liberation Army (Tentara Pembebasan Nasional Papua Barat - TPNPB) as the military wing of the OPM. These movements then became more widespread and are now known by several other groups, such as the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP), Free West-Papua Movement (GPM), Armed Criminal Group (KKB) and many other small groups (Setyaningrum, 2023).

Apart from using diplomacy and terror, several groups, such as ULWMP, also use political lobbying to gain international sympathy rather than armed movements. This organization, led by Benny Wenda, often carries out propaganda related to violations of human rights issues committed by the Indonesian Government and security forces. In carrying out its propaganda, ULMWP also carries out a netwar strategy by using bot accounts on social media to spread misleading information about violence committed by security forces in Papua with photos, videos and infographics containing falsehoods cornering the Indonesian Government (Nurhidayat et al., 2023). Meanwhile, TPNPB and KKB are separatist movements that chose

different actions by using armed violence to fight for the independence of West Papua from Indonesia.

The conflict between separatist movements and the state has caused major problems for security and stability in Papua. In recent years, violence has increased and has also threatened the preservation of forests and the environment in Papua. Many separatist groups control plantation land on a large scale and trade in illegal timber and mining. Sometimes, these groups also persecute residents who disagree with them. These groups carried out acts of armed violence in mountainous areas, with a total of 65 crimes committed from December 2017 to early 2023. The crimes led by Egianus Kogoya have caused casualties from civilians to security forces: 34 civilian casualties and 14 security force casualties.

Some factors have contributed to the increasing popularity of this separatist movement in recent years, including (Pamungkas et al., 2020):

1. The increase of marginalization of Papuans in Indonesia
2. Development disparities between Java (the main island of Indonesia) and the eastern region, including Papua, cause residents to feel neglected or exploited economically
3. Increasing reports of human rights violations committed against indigenous peoples, especially in rural areas
4. Support from international lobby groups such as the Free West Papua advocacy campaign has also helped draw more attention to various aspects related to the situation under Indonesian rule

Since the beginning of Indonesian independence, the Papuan separatist movement has received mixed responses from each country's president. During President Soekarno's reign, the response was coloured by power and political intrigue since the Round Table Conference. Papuan nationalist groups consider that the process of integrating West Irian (Papua) into Indonesia is invalid because it is full of fabrications. This group also criticized the Trikora operation, which was carried out from December 1961 to August 1962, because it was the root of political violence and human rights violations wrapped up in the construction of nationalism and defending the integrity of the Republic of Indonesia. Meanwhile, for Indonesian nationalist groups, the Trikora operation is a war against the enemy, the Republic of Indonesia is a fixed price, and the desire to separate from the Republic of Indonesia is an act of violating the constitution. Soekarno's series of efforts to maintain the integration of Papua in Indonesia through various military operations are often seen as not only attacking the physicality but also the psychology of the Papuan people because these operations include a series of military and intelligence actions that kidnap, detain, arrest, chase and even kill Papuans.

Furthermore, during the reign of President Soeharto, security policy in Papua was generally characterized by increased militarization to control potential separatist threats and ensure compliance with the Government. Military operations are increasingly being carried out; some of the most famous major operations include the Clean Sweep Operation (1977-1978) and the Tumpas Operation (1981-1982). Apart from that, this policy through military operations is also carried out to ensure the security of foreign investment in Papua, such as the Freeport McMoRan, which is based in America and exploits Papua's natural resources in copper and gold. The New Order government's violent approach in dealing with the Papua issue often contributed to a continuous cycle of violence and conflict. Although successful in curbing separatist movements and maintaining foreign investment in Papua, this policy has yet to succeed in resolving the root problems underlying the conflict, such as problems of economic and social inequality, neglect of the rights of indigenous peoples, and problems of discrimination. Therefore, although the main aim is to maintain integrity and stability, this policy has also created prolonged tension and conflict.

In subsequent government periods, the government's approach to Papua was considered quite soft. During President Habibie's reign, 100 representatives of Papuan figures were brought to Jakarta to discuss the Papuan people's aspirations. This meeting resulted in Law Number 21 of 2001 concerning Special Autonomy for Papua, which explains that the Papuan people have the right to enjoy the results of the development of their land fairly. Furthermore, during the presidency of Joko Widodo, Papua Province made much progress, especially in the infrastructure sector. The Special Autonomy Fund, with increasingly strict supervision and the formation of a New Autonomous Region, is the government's effort to accelerate development for the welfare of the Papuan people.

### **The Securitization Of Papuan Terrorist Separatist Groups**

Securitization is a process and perspective of political authority in understanding, perceiving, and implementing a security issue in the high-threat category and beyond reasonable limits, where political decisions regarding handling the threat are specific. Securitization begins with a speech act about a particular threat by a state leader. A "speech act" diverts the threat from normal politics to a security issue. In the securitization process, the state will perceive and shift a threat from ordinary to extraordinary. In extraordinary circumstances, the state, through the Government, can take steps that are considered important and strategic. The success of securitization does not always depend on the existence of a real threat but on the discursive ability to effectively provide development with a certain tone.

As stated by, securitization as a process consists of three main spectrums, namely: non-politicized, where the state does not address the issue and is not included in the public debate; politicized where the issue is managed within the standard political system, part of public policy; and, securitized where the issue is framed as a security question through an act of securitization with securitizing actors articulates an already politicized issue as an existential threat to referent objects. In this study, the Indonesian Government's efforts to label the Papuan armed criminal group, which continues to carry out movements demanding independence from Indonesia, as a Papuan terrorist separatist group is a securitization effort that is at the second level of the spectrum, namely the process of politicizing the issue.

Five main components of securitization need to be considered in the second step of the spectrum: the politicizing issues in securitization. First, the securitizing actor in this issue is the Indonesian Government through the Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs (Menko Polhukam), Mahfud MD, on April 29 2021, by designating the Armed Criminal Group in Papua as one of the terrorist separatist groups in Indonesia. Second, every securitization effort will start with speech acts. The speech acts by Mahfud MD were carried out verbally at a press conference at the Coordinating Ministry for Political, Legal and Security Affairs office, with detailed statements as follows:

“The Government has filtered the statements put forward by the Chair of the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR), the State Intelligence Agency (BIN), leaders of the National Police and the Indonesian National Armed Forces that many Papuan community leaders and traditional leaders came to the office of the Coordinating Ministry for Political, Legal and Security Affairs, as well as the official Papuan government, both regional government and the Regional Legislative Council, who expressed support for the Indonesian government to take the necessary actions to deal with acts of violence that have emerged recently in Papua. With their statement, the government considers that organizations and people in Papua who commit violence are categorized as terrorists.”

Speech act as a performative language act has at least three purposes, namely: locutionary (what the actor says), (2) illocutionary (what is meant by the actor's words), and (3) perlocutionary (what is expected to happen and be done by the audience) (Austin, 1962: 120-121). In this case, what is expected to happen and be done by the audience will be discussed in the next section regarding political framing. The third is existential threats. In this research, the existential threats are some Free Papua Movement groups wanting independence from Indonesia. These groups are existential threats because their efforts to achieve their interests are carried out in dangerous ways, justifying violence, taking the lives of civilians and the

national army, and destroying infrastructure in Papua to create terror and demonstrate the existence of their groups. Fourth, the referent object is an object that needs to be protected. In this case, the main referent object is the indigenous Papuan people, who were also the targets of the terror acts. The Government must also protect the migrant community, investments, state infrastructure, and legal officials who work and drive the economy in Papua. Finally, the audience as the target of securitization, which needs to be persuaded and accept the issue as a security threat, is the Indonesian people and the global community.

The Indonesian Government carried out securitization efforts by labelling Papuan pro-independence fighters as separatist terrorists amid increasing incidents of violence in Papua targeted at security forces. This action is a step to provide legal certainty in dealing with threats in the area and ensure security and public order are maintained. By labelling it "terrorist", it implicitly gives the government legitimacy to use all available means and resources, including the military, to confront the threat. On the other hand, this determination has become a source of controversy and received mixed responses from various parties. There are concerns that this determination could trigger an escalation of violence and human rights violations in Papua. In addition, this determination could complicate dialogue and reconciliation efforts between the Government and pro-independence groups in Papua.

### **Political Framing Of Terrorism Issues By The Indonesian Government**

Framing is an act in communication that provides a certain interpretation or meaning. In a political context, framing is used to provide a certain perspective to the public regarding an issue so that the public will view the issue according to the frame that has been created (Hidayatulloh et al., 2022: 559). In the phenomenon being researched, Papua has long faced the problem of separatism by the Free Papua Organization (OPM). Some of their actions are associated with acts of violence, which are often considered terrorist acts. Even so, labelling the group as a "terrorist separatist group" by the government will, of course, have some consequences.

The handling efforts will be based on Law No. 5 of 2018 concerning the Eradication of Criminal Acts of Terrorism if we label separatist groups as "terrorists" This law explicitly defines what is meant by terrorism and gives full authority to the government to take various actions against groups deemed to be involved in terror activities. Descriptively, this law covers aspects such as planning, preparation and implementation of actions that can cause fear in certain communities and can cause mass casualties using violence, as well as other actions related to terrorism (Wangge & Lawson, 2021).

This determination sparked widespread controversy and debate at the global level. The Indonesian government's decision to designate Papuan pro-independence groups as "terrorists" created a new dynamic in the foundation of relations between the central government and pro-independence groups in Papua (Gumelar & Nachrawi, 2022). This determination has several significant impacts on potential dialogue or negotiation processes. First, giving the label "terrorist" to this group indicates that the group is outside the boundaries of legal norms that can be invited to dialogue. It implies they are no longer considered parties with the legitimacy to be invited to sit together in formal discussion forums. Second, this determination affects the perceptions of the Papuan people. Papuans, who have an important role in supporting or rejecting the dialogue process, may become more sceptical or even opposed to the idea of interacting or negotiating with groups that have been labelled "terrorists". Such a determination can complicate efforts to build trust between the two parties. By labelling them "terrorists," the government indirectly sends the message that these groups are enemies that must be eradicated, not potential partners in peace talks. It could increase pressure on the government to refrain from continuing the dialogue initiative. Third, this determination gives the government a stronger legal basis for acting against pro-independence groups, increasing the risk of conflict escalation. Without open channels of communication, misunderstandings and tensions can more easily arise, fostering a long-lasting cycle of violence. A peaceful solution must be achieved through dialogue based on mutual trust between the Government and Papuan pro-independence groups, creating sincere intentions rather than using a security approach whose impact could spread and influence public perception. The public may find it more difficult to accept the idea of dialogue with groups considered terrorists, if the government should not negotiate with "terrorists." This adds a layer of complexity to the pursuit of constructive dialogue. Finally, it is important to understand that this framing is not an absolute truth but rather an interpretation based on a certain perspective.

As a process or perspective, the success of a political framing can be analyzed through four things, namely the focus of strategic actors, the actor's decision to choose to be positive or negative, the actor's way of determining whether to be defensive or offensive and the maturity of the substantive framework used by the actor to form the media and public attention to the goals. Through the four components analyzed, we will finally understand that the initial step of securitization in the form of a speech act through political framing worked as expected or counter-productive and does not need to be continued to the end of the spectrum of securitization; the real steps which articulated in deploying security forces to protect the referent object from the existential threats.

The first point is the focus of the strategic actors, namely the government and security actors (army and police). Explicitly, the focus of strategic actors is placed on conditions that are less conducive in parts of Papua, especially on the threat to the security forces, state civil servants and the people with the emergence of the ideological struggle of separatist groups to achieve independence and sovereignty by leaving the Republic of Indonesia. With this focus, the framing shows how the victims of physical violence, psychological threats, and the murder of civilians by the Free West Papua Movement were raised and directed towards threats to human security, specifically directing to the crime of separatist terrorism. With the political framing formed in such a way, the strategic actors that were previously only the state through the police have now expanded to the Indonesian central government and the local Papuan government, which includes the Head of the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT), the Coordinating Minister for Politics, Law and Security, Chairman of Commission I of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia RI, Chairman of Commission III of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia RI, Commander of the Indonesian National Army, Head of the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia, Chairman of the Papuan People's Representative Council, Chairman of the Papuan People's Assembly and also includes Papuan Indigenous Community figures. The threat was communicated in such a way that it became an extraordinary crime not only to provide security to Indonesian civil society and security forces in Papua but also to implicitly convey to the media that "the government is taking extra steps to provide protection and a sense of security for migrants and investment for can drive the economy movement in Papua".

Second, when analyzing an actor's decision to be positive or negative, the analysis needs to be directed at the question, "Who is the audience for this decision?". In a neutral position, the government, as a securitization actor, only makes rational choices about the decisions that must be taken to provide security to its people. However, when placed in contextual analysis, the government's decision to label "separatist terrorists" to some of the Papuan people who are pro-Papuan independence, as well as the relatives of those who support this group, of course, this decision will hurt them even more. According to them, the government interprets freedom to determine one's destiny as an act of terrorism. In other words, for some Papuan, this decision has a negative value and increases the escalation of conflict. Meanwhile, for the general audience, especially migrants to Papua and foreign investors who support development in Papua, this decision tends to have positive value because it provides a sense of security that the government exists to protect them from the threat who might want to take their lives.



Third, although the labelling of terrorism justifies the government of the Republic of Indonesia to take all necessary means, including militaristic action, to combat the Papuan Terrorist Separatist Group, this momentum was not taken aggressively by the government, and it was not proactive in using war methods. The political framing carried out is only limited to directing public attention, while the actions taken by the government are defensive. Although the government has added security forces in Papua periodically in recent times, their purpose there is only to provide humanitarian assistance and guard the border.

Lastly, framing politics as a process must certainly have an end goal. After directing public attention to an issue framework, the issue needs to be processed in such a way as to create a substantive framework to fulfil the actor's interests. Unfortunately, after the framing was carried out in 2021, the government does not appear to be serious about dealing with the threat of violence caused by the Free West Papua Movement. The government needs to be more alert in taking concrete steps to reduce social, economic and development disparities in Papua which are the root of the problem. However, when viewed from the success of political framing as a speech act, the results of this research are focused on the public's response to accepting this framing. In brief, this framing produces responses of acceptance and rejection. The groups that receive it are the Papuan people who have felt the presence and sense of security provided by the Indonesian government through distributing special autonomy and development funds in Papua. Meanwhile, in a small part of Papua where special autonomy funds and the role of the government are less felt, the Papuan people, often related to pro-Papuan independence groups, reject the label given. As a speech act, this labelling should be followed by concrete steps that can comprehensively create security for all parties in Papua.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, the government's political framing of the Papuan pro-independence group as a terrorist separatist group aims to protect citizens and emphasize the security narrative. While a tough approach can mobilize domestic support by highlighting the spirit of nationalism, excessive action can distort the government's narrative and invite international condemnation. Therefore, the approach must be proportional, prioritize inclusive dialogue, and pay attention to the welfare of the Papuan people. The government must balance security and community welfare to overcome the conflict in Papua.

The framing of "terrorism" provides a legal basis and moral justification for harsh action by the Indonesian government if separatist groups disrupt national security and economic interests in Papua. However, a repressive approach towards separatist groups has the potential

to exacerbate tensions between the Papuan people and the government. For Indonesia, maintaining Papua's stability while paying attention to local aspirations is a major challenge amidst complex and changing geopolitical dynamics.

Furthermore, the decisions taken by the government have deep implications for the dynamics of relations between the central government and pro-independence groups in Papua. This "terrorist" label complicates dialogue and reconciliation efforts. It increases the risk of conflict escalation, thus requiring a serious substantive framework with a more inclusive approach, considering aspects of justice and human rights and evaluating existing framing to achieve a peaceful solution for all parties involved.

### **Conflict Of Interest**

The Author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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