

Dynamics of the Negotiation Process in the Efforts to Free the Susi Air Pilot Hostage in Papua

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ABSTRACT

This article thoroughly examines the complex dynamics of the negotiation process that took place during the attempt to free Susi Air pilot Philips Max Martin, who was held hostage by the Armed Criminal Group (KKB) in Papua. This study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the various factors that influenced the success of the negotiation, as well as the important role of the government in this complex situation. Using a qualitative research methodology, this study draws on a variety of literature, including books, academic journals, and relevant articles that discuss the theme of negotiation and hostage situations in the unique socio-political context of Papua. The research findings reveal that the success of the negotiation was greatly influenced by effective communication strategies, a deep understanding of local cultural and social dynamics, and the active involvement of various stakeholders, including community leaders and government representatives. This article aims to provide valuable insights into the negotiation process in hostage situations, particularly in conflict-ridden areas, and to offer recommendations for future approaches to similar crises.

Keywords: *Negotiation, government policy, Papua, socio-political contexts*

INTRODUCTION

Negotiation is a crucial and often complex process in conflict resolution, particularly in high-stakes situations such as hostage-taking. In the Papuan context, where historical grievances and socio-political tensions are prevalent, hostage situations often involve multifaceted demands that go beyond mere security concerns. The kidnapping of a Susi Air pilot in February 2023 by Papuan armed groups is an example of the challenges faced by negotiators in such scenarios. The incident not only attracted national attention but also highlighted the complex interplay between local aspirations for autonomy and Indonesia's broader political landscape.

This study aims to analyze the negotiation dynamics that occurred in this particular case, identify key factors that contributed to the eventual success of the negotiations, and assess the role of the government in facilitating the dialogue. By examining the strategies used by the negotiators and the armed groups' responses, this study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the negotiation process in the Papuan context, offering insights that can inform future efforts to address similar situations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, the materials and methods used are designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of the negotiation process in the context of the hostagetaking of Susi Air pilots in Papua. The materials used include various sources of academic literature, including books and journal articles that discuss negotiation theories and relevant hostage-taking cases. This literature not only provides a theoretical basis, but also helps in understanding the social and political context behind the hostage-taking incident. In addition, official documents from the government and security agencies involved in the negotiation process are also an important part of this research material, because these documents provide in-depth information about the policies and steps taken in the hostagefreeing efforts.

The research method used in this study is a qualitative approach, which allows researchers to explore deeper meaning and understanding of the negotiation process that occurred. This approach is considered appropriate because complex and dynamic situations require analysis that focuses not only on quantitative data, but also on the existing context and nuances. In order to collect data, a literature study method was applied, in which researchers collected information from various sources, including books, articles, and official documents. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants, such as experts, practitioners, and community leaders who have direct experience in hostage situations in Papua. This interview aims to obtain deeper views and experiences regarding the ongoing negotiation process.

Data analysis was conducted by identifying patterns and themes that emerged from the information collected, using an inductive approach to draw relevant conclusions. To increase the validity and reliability of the findings, data triangulation was applied, where information from various sources was combined to provide a more complete and accurate picture of the dynamics of the negotiations. With this combination of diverse materials and systematic methods, the study is expected to make a significant contribution to a better understanding of the negotiation process in the context of hostage-taking in Papua, as well as providing recommendations for related parties in handling similar cases in the future.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this study, the main focus is to analyze and understand in depth the negotiation process carried out in an effort to free the Susi Air pilot hostages in Papua. This negotiation process is a very complex activity and involves many parties, and is influenced by various interrelated factors. Therefore, it is important to dig deeper into the dynamics that occur during the process, including the challenges and obstacles faced by all parties involved. First of all, the negotiation process that lasted for 19 months involved various actors,

including community leaders, religious leaders, and security forces from the TNI and Polri. The approach used in this negotiation is a soft approach, which aims to minimize risks and ensure the safety of the hostages. In this context, the involvement of local figures is very important, because they have a better understanding of the social and cultural conditions of the local community. This allows for more effective communication and builds trust between the parties involved in the negotiations.

During the negotiation process, continuous communication is one of the key factors influencing the success of the hostage release. Negotiators must be able to maintain open channels of communication with the hostage-takers, and ensure that the information provided is accurate and reliable. In addition, support from the community is also very important, because people who feel involved in the negotiation process tend to be more supportive of efforts made to achieve a peaceful resolution. However, it is undeniable that there are various obstacles that arise during the negotiation process. One of the main obstacles is public dissatisfaction with the government, which often influences the attitude of the hostage-takers. This dissatisfaction can be rooted in various problems, such as social injustice, lack of access to basic services, and marginalization experienced by the Papuan people. Therefore, it is important for the government to listen to and understand the aspirations of the community, and take real steps to improve their welfare.

The role of the government in the negotiation process is also very crucial. The government must be able to make wise and strategic decisions, which do not only focus on the release of hostages, but also on long-term efforts to create stability and peace in the region. In this case, the government needs to involve the community in decision-making and development, so that trust between the government and the community can be built properly.

DISCUSSION

First of all, the negotiation process that lasted for 19 months involved various actors, including community leaders, religious leaders, and security forces from the TNI and Polri. The approach used in this negotiation was a soft approach, which aimed to minimize risks and ensure the safety of the hostages. In this context, the involvement of local figures was very important, because they had a better understanding of the social and cultural conditions of the local community. This allowed for more effective communication and built trust between the parties involved in the negotiations.

During the negotiation process, continuous communication is one of the key factors influencing the success of hostage release. Negotiators must be able to maintain open channels of communication with the hostage-takers, and ensure that the information provided is accurate and reliable. In addition, support from the community is also very important, because people who feel involved in the negotiation process tend to be more supportive of efforts made to achieve a peaceful resolution. Community involvement in this process not only provides legitimacy to the negotiators, but also creates a sense of ownership of the results of the negotiations. However, it is undeniable that there are various obstacles that arise during the negotiation process.

One of the main obstacles is community dissatisfaction with the government, which often influences the attitude of the hostagetakers. This dissatisfaction can be rooted in various problems, such as social injustice, lack of access to basic services, and marginalization experienced by the Papuan people. Therefore, it is important for the

government to listen to and understand the aspirations of the community, and take real steps to improve their welfare. In this case, the government needs to take a more inclusive and responsive approach to the needs of the community, so that it can reduce tensions and create a conducive atmosphere for negotiations.

The role of the government in the negotiation process is also very crucial. The government must be able to make wise and strategic decisions, which do not only focus on the release of hostages, but also on long-term efforts to create stability and peace in the region. In this case, the government needs to involve the community in decision-making and development, so that trust between the government and the community can be built properly. Community involvement in the development process will not only increase a sense of ownership, but will also provide an opportunity for the community to contribute to creating sustainable solutions.

Overall, this study aims to provide a better understanding of the negotiation process in the context of hostage-taking in Papua, as well as to identify factors that influence the success of these negotiations. Thus, it is hoped that the results of this study can provide a significant contribution to the development of more effective strategies in handling hostage cases in the future, as well as provide recommendations for related parties in efforts to create peace and justice in Papua. This study is also expected to be a reference for further research related to similar issues, so that it can enrich the knowledge in this field.

Furthermore, it is important to realize that hostage-taking is not just a criminal act, but also a manifestation of deeper problems, such as social, political, and economic dissatisfaction. Therefore, the approach taken in dealing with hostage-taking cases must be comprehensive and oriented towards solving the underlying problems that exist. This includes efforts to improve community welfare, provide better access to education and health services, and create adequate employment opportunities. Thus, it is hoped that future hostage-taking cases can be minimized, and the Papuan people can live in a safer and more prosperous state.

In a broader context, the results of this study can also provide insight for policy makers and practitioners in formulating better strategies in dealing with conflicts in other regions with similar characteristics. By understanding the dynamics that occur in the negotiation process in Papua, it is hoped that more effective and sustainable solutions can be found to overcome the problem of hostage-taking and other social conflicts in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the negotiation process in an effort to free the Susi Air pilot hostage in Papua is a very complex activity and involves many interacting factors. The process that lasted for 19 months showed that the success of the negotiations did not only depend on the strategy used, but also on the involvement of various parties, including community leaders, religious leaders, and security forces. The soft approach implemented by the TNI and Polri, which involved continuous dialogue and communication, proved effective in minimizing risk and ensuring the safety of the hostages. One important point resulting from this study is that the involvement of local figures is crucial in creating trust and building effective communication between the parties involved in the negotiations.

Community leaders and religious leaders have a deep understanding of local social and cultural conditions, so they can act as a bridge between the hostage-taking group and

the negotiators. This shows that in the context of hostage-taking, an approach that involves local communities can increase the chances of successful negotiations.

In addition, this study also identified various factors that influence the success of negotiations, such as continuous communication, synergy between all elements involved, and a deep understanding of the local context. The success of negotiations is not only determined by the actions taken during the process, but also by how all parties can collaborate and create an atmosphere conducive to dialogue. Therefore, it is important for all parties to continue to strive to build relationships of mutual trust and respect. The role of the government in the negotiation process is also very important.

The government must be able to make wise and strategic decisions, which do not only focus on the release of hostages, but also on long-term efforts to create stability and peace in the region. In this case, the government needs to involve the community in decision-making and development, so that trust between the government and the community can be built properly. Community involvement in the development process will not only increase a sense of ownership, but will also provide an opportunity for the community to contribute to creating sustainable solutions.

Overall, this study makes a significant contribution to the understanding of the negotiation process in the context of hostage-taking in Papua. The results of this study are expected to be a reference for related parties in formulating more effective strategies in handling hostage cases in the future. In addition, this study also provides recommendations for the government and security forces to better listen to and understand the aspirations of the community, and take real steps to improve their welfare.

Thus, it is important to realize that hostage-taking is not just a criminal act, but also a manifestation of deeper problems, such as social, political, and economic dissatisfaction. Therefore, the approach taken in dealing with hostage-taking cases must be comprehensive and oriented towards solving the underlying problems that exist. This includes efforts to improve community welfare, provide better access to education and health services, and create adequate employment opportunities. With these steps, it is hoped that future hostage taking cases can be minimized, and the Papuan people can live in a safer and more prosperous state. Finally, the results of this study can also provide insight for policy makers and practitioners in formulating better strategies in dealing with conflicts in other regions with similar characteristics.

By understanding the dynamics that occur in the negotiation process in Papua, it is hoped that more effective and sustainable solutions can be found to overcome the problem of hostage-taking and other social conflicts in Indonesia. This study is expected to be the first step in efforts to create sustainable peace and social justice for the entire community, as well as provide inspiration for further research related to similar issues.

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