

ABSTRAK

Di hadapan ancaman berupa serangan nuklir dari Korea Utara, Korea Selatan dalam kerja sama militernya dengan Amerika Serikat memutuskan untuk menempatkan sistem pertahanan anti-rudal buatan AS yang dinamai *Terminal High Altitude Area Defense* atau THAAD. Langkah ini tidak disambut dengan baik oleh pemerintah Cina yang memandang THAAD sebagai ancaman terhadap kepentingan keamanan negaranya. Penolakan tersebut dipertegas oleh Beijing dengan menjatuhkan sanksi ekonomi berupa terhadap Korea Selatan yang kemudian menimbulkan kerugian ekonomi yang signifikan bagi Korea Selatan, serta ketegangan dalam hubungan politik kedua negara tersebut.

Tulisan ini menganalisis alasan di balik keputusan penempatan THAAD oleh Korea Selatan dari sudut pandang realisme defensif. Dengan menempatkan teknologi anti-rudal THAAD, Korea Selatan berusaha menciptakan *balance of power* di Semenanjung Korea di hadapan agresivitas negara tetangganya di belahan Utara. Konsekuensi keputusan strategis tersebut terhadap hubungan bilateral Korea Selatan-Cina, khususnya di bidang ekonomi, mengindikasikan bahwa Korea Selatan perlu mengeksplorasi rute-rute perdagangan alternatif demi mengurangi ketergantungan ekonominya terhadap Cina.

Kata kunci: THAAD, kerja sama militer Korea Selatan-Amerika Serikat, hubungan bilateral Korea Selatan-Cina, realisme defensif, Semenanjung Korea.

ABSTRACT

In the face of the North Korean nuclear threat, South Korea in alliance with the United States of America made the decision to deploy THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense), the US-made anti-missile defense system. This decision was met with backlash from the Chinese government who perceived THAAD as a threat to their country's security interests. Beijing's objection was then reaffirmed with economic sanctions in the form of boycotts against South Korea, which caused a significant economic loss on South Korea's part, as well as rising political tensions between the two countries.

This paper seeks to analyze the rationale behind South Korea's deployment of THAAD through the lens of defensive realism. By deploying the THAAD anti-missile technology, South Korea attempts to create a balance of power in the Korean Peninsula in the face of its aggressive neighbor in the North. The consequences of this strategic decision on Sino-Korean bilateral relations, particularly on the South Korean economy, indicates that South Korea needs to explore alternative trade routes in order to be less dependent on its economic ties with China.

Keywords: THAAD, the ROK-US military alliance, South Korea-China relations, defensive realism, Korean Peninsula.