



## Malaysia - Thailand Relation in the Security Perspective

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**Abstract:** Malaysia and Thailand shared long relations history journeys for both countries. The relation between both countries can be traced back to the early 15<sup>th</sup> Century when the empire of Malacca and Ayutthaya competed to become the greatest empire in the South East Asian. In this paper, Malaysia and Thailand's relationships were explained, including both countries' security interests. Furthermore, this paper explained Malaysia and Thailand relationships in three phases. These three phases were described from the early 15<sup>th</sup> Century until the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Notably, Malaysia and Thailand were observed had taken a different approaches in addressing their security interest.

**Keywords:** Malaysia, Thailand, relation, security and phases of relation

### 1. Introduction

*"Without security, 'there is no place for industry... no arts, no letters, no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.."*

(Hobbes.T 1946)

In the narrative of international relations, the term security and economy has always been an essential aspect for countries making foreign policy between one actor to another actor or alliance. Without a hunk of concrete and complex foreign policy, it can be a massive threat to sovereignty, good governance, and economic development for a country. Security can be known as an effort to create a legal boundary, armed forces, and set rules of laws against any vulnerability that can be a threat toward freedom and prosperity (Preece, J.J 2011). Security can also be known as a government's set effort to make sure the peace and capability of power, such as (military power and economic power), can be achieved and indirectly constrain any threat toward the countries (Baldwin, A.D 1997). Furthermore, security goals can also be applied by a form of a relation between countries to other countries or form pact of the countries with the same interest in the objective. Based on the relation between the actor, it can positively impact the relationship between the actor in the form of good understanding and mutual trust of both actors.

In understanding the relationship between countries, we can look up the theories "classical realism" coined by Hans. J Morgenthau, in his book "Power among Nation." In that discourse, Morgenthau explained that countries as actors of realism always seek power, interest, and influence towards another actor or people (Morgenthau, J.H. 1948). Furthermore, from his idea, Morgenthau also explains that a few ways to become stable and prosperous countries such as expand territory, increase military power, increment the economy, *and* build an allied. From this fundamental explanation, we can see some actions from the classical government, such as the city-state of Greek, Athens, and Sparta, that having a war between Greek and Parsi around 480 BCE (Wohlforth, C.W et al. 2007). Parsi empire, in that meantime, had been threatened the sovereignty and capability of the Greek empire. Before the Parsi empire emerged, the city-state like Athens, Sparta, Corinth, and others are separated by law and govern. Still, by threatening from Parsi in 480 BCE, almost all city-state in Greek unite as Hellenic League against Parsi, and the effort of allied and cooperation between the city-state had to return a successful result for the history of the Greek Empire until today (Brunt, A.P 1953). From this explanation, we can fundamentally understand that security is one of the critical factors of

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relation fulfilled in classical realism theory in the discourse of international relations. Same as the relation between Sparta and Athens that has been united as an allied in terms of security and sovereignty, the relationship between Malaysia and Thailand can also be seen by fundamentally understanding in the context of security and freedom.

The relation between Malaysia and Thailand can be seen early in the 15th Century between Malacca and Siam Empire. The condition of the relationship between both empires can be understood as a threat and enemies for each other sovereign, economic interest, and influence of political power before the situation between the two-nation change after the end of World War 2. It can be sure the term "Security" had been playing a significant role in the friendship and brotherhood between two Southeast Asian Countries in many situations that have been faced by Malaysia, neither Thailand from the end of World War 2 until nowadays. Malaysia and Thailand had shared a long history, and to understand the relationship between both nations, we must look back on account before the end of World War 2 that has been stated before. This paper will explain the narrative of the relation between Malaysia and Thailand in three phases. As been written Kobkua Suwannathat-Pian, in his article "Special Thai-Malaysia Relation," stated the relationship between Malaysia and Thailand could be understood in three phases (Kobkua Suannathat-Pian 2002). According to Kobkua, all three phases had explained different types and approaches to relation to Malaysia and Thailand.

The first phase of Malaysia and Thailand's relation in the security perspective was known as "*Bunga Emas, Bunga Perak* or traditional." The second phase can be known as the relation between Malaysia and Thailand after World War 2. The relationship between both countries looks at different approaches and interests than the first phase of Malaysia and Thailand's relation. The third phase of the relationship between both countries can be seen after the end of the Cold War or, more precisely, the collapse of communism and socialism ideology in leftist countries in Russia and China. Afterward, in the 21st Century, both countries had been through some problems between the two nations as one unit. In this fundamental explanation, we can understand that Malaysia and Thailand had been a very long historical journey and hardship between both governments. They get through as brotherhood nations between them.

## **2. First Phase: "Bunga Emas, Bunga Perak or Traditional"**

The first phase of the relation between Malaysia and Thailand, according to Kobkua in his discourse, had been known by "Bunga Emas and Bunga Perak" (Kobkua Suannathat-Pian 2002). The term Bunga Emas and Bunga Perak was used to describe both government's situation during the 15th Century until the end of World War 2. The first phase of the relation between Malaysia and Thailand can be seen as the early 15th Century when the Malay Peninsular was governed and influenced by the Malacca Malay Empire. Thailand had been governed by the Ayutthaya government that had been in the realm of Siam, or today we know as Thailand. Malacca and Ayutthaya in the 15th Century was a big government where both countries have a significant influence in the Malay Archipelago, Siam, and Malacca straits. Malacca, in general, that time well known as a focus investor harbor from the west and east world. Malacca's success from being an unknown place before the 15th Century to one of the busiest ports had threatened some government and empire in the Malay archipelago, especially from Ayutthaya monarch. As been discuss early, classical theoretical realism is the suit theories to comprehend the relation between Malacca and Ayutthaya government.

"truly I believed, that more ships arrived here than any other place in the world, and especially there came here all sorts of spices and an immense quantity of other merchandise"- Varthema.

(Jones, W.J 1928)

From this statement from Ludovico di Varthema, it describes in a clear picture that Malacca was the busiest port in the 15th Century from all travelers and investors from the west and east. Sultan Muzaffar Shah governed the Malacca Empire; meanwhile, Ayutthaya was led by King Baromaja II; both empires were powerful political entities and influence and a security threat and power for each other. From this context, Ayutthaya, according to Marisson, G.E, had been launched an attack towards Malacca as King Baromaja II see Malacca as a threat for his government (Marisson, G.E 1949). The first attack was being held in 1445, with over 10,000 armies to invade Malacca, but unfortunately, the campaign against Malacca does not reach success. After a few years, under the reign of Siamese King Baroma Trailkronat, Siam launched an attack towards Malacca to regain victory and influence at South East Asian continental. The impact of Siam's attempt to invade Malacca, the reign of Malacca, had pursuit relations with China Empire to protect Malacca from Siam's attempt (Blagend, O.C 1906). As China Empire had interference between Siam and Malacca problematic, both governments had been making peace between both empires.

Furthermore, according to Malay Annals, during the reign of Sultan Mansur Shah, Malacca has been allied with Siam to invade several states that threaten both empire sovereignty, interest, and influence (A. Samad Said 2008). Meanwhile, the trade between both states also reaches the highest level after both states make a peace agreement and interference by China Empire at that time. The trade between both state Malacca and Siam in that time had given prosperity for both empires by trade plenty of products such as rice, slave, garments, and others' needs (Baker. C 2003).

With this trade between both empires, the relation between Malacca and Siam from being a threat to each other political power to become and allied and close friend until 16th Century, when the Portuguese attacked Malacca

Besides the relation between Malacca and Siam in the first phase of Bunga Emas, Bunga Perak, or traditional, we can also identify historical perspective relation between Malaysia and Thailand from Siam and Kedah's perspective as an early 15th century. The first contact between both states can be seen in Kedah's term gave several consolations towards Siam, such as Bunga Emas and other precious things to show respect and influence of the Siam Empire (Kobkua Suannathat-Pian 1999). Besides the consolation to Siam Empire, the relation between Kedah State and Siam Empire also can identify by the support of Kedah to Siam by sending support of the army in the Siam war campaign during the war between Siam and Burma. However, the war campaign between Siam against Burma turnout sluggish result towards Siam Empire (Shahrom Ahamt 1971). The imprint of the embarrassing result states that paternalism towards Bangkok had gains independence, including the State of Kedah. From this action, the Siam Empire under King Rama's reign in 1821 had launched an attack toward the State of Kedah to regain her influence and political legitimacy in the Malay Empire's northern peninsular.

According to Gullick, the Siam attacked the State of Kedah. M.J had been launched on 12 November 1821. The State of Kedah, in the meantime, being led by Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin and meanwhile attacked by the Siam Empire lead by Raja of Ligor, the Siamese governor of the southern province of Siam Empire (Gullick, M.J 1983). Siam's invaded impel Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin and his family to retreat to the south of Kedah and get the settlement in Penang governed by the British. After Siam ultimately succeeded in regaining Kedah's State as one of her influences, Siam had several rebellious actions from Malay leader of Kedah to attacked and took back their state. However, the campaign did not reach its target ultimately. With the capability of the Siam Empire and alliance of the British Empire, the mission to retake the State of Kedah just a failed mission. After Siam regain her influence in the State of Kedah, Siam directly controls Kedah's governance from Bangkok to secure her influence and limit any risk of rebellion from local people until 1939 under the reign of King Rama III.

After several years Siam directly controls the State of Kedah from Bangkok; King Rama III decided to compromise Siam reign in the State of Kedah by return the govern of Kedah to a local leader. By 1841, Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin came back as the State of Kedah; however, Kedah had divided into four provinces at that time: Kedah, Setul-Lingu, Perlis, and Kubang Pasu (Kobkua Suannathat-Pian 1986). Nevertheless, after several years Kubang Pasu had been merge under the province of Kedah again. Meanwhile, Perlis and Setul-Lingu becoming different authority control until today. After the action taken by King Rama III, which can be understood by policy divide and rule, the influence and deference of the State of Kedah towards the Siam Empire is back. This can be seen by the action of the State of Kedah to help Siam Empire against the French in the late 19th Century (Shahrom Ahmat 1979). Kedah's relation from being a threat of sovereignty for each other capability and political legitimacy became an allied and friend almost the same as stated before between the Malacca Empire and Ayutthaya. This long historical relationship between the State of Kedah and the Siam Empire describes Malaysia's long journey and Thailand's relation in the traditional phase.

Meanwhile, in 1909, Siam and the British signed an agreement called the Anglo-Siamese Treaty 1909 or called by Bangkok Treaty 1909. In this treaty, both entities agreed on several terms, such as the legitimate boundary between Malaya-Siam and territory for both nations. In terms of the treaty, Perlis, Kedah Terengganu, and Kelantan under British protection while the other southern Siam, like Satun, Narathiwat, and several other provinces remain under the authority of the Siam government. Unfortunately, during World War 2, the four states of Malaya return to Siam as the British failed to defend North Peninsular Malaya from the Japanese troops (International Boundary Study 1965). After the end of World War 2, Siam or the new name of the countries "Thailand" return the four states of North Malay Peninsular Malaya, as stated in the treaty that is signed by both government leaders in 1909. This boundary made in 1909 was used until the modern era today as a legitimate boundary and land of sovereignty, Malaysia, and Thailand. Meanwhile, the signed 1909 treaty has a significant impact on people who lived near the borders. For example, some Thailand people who speak Malay as their native tongue were separated from their families and indirectly became a culture problematic (Harishon Radzi et al. 2018).

### 3. Second Phase: After World War 2

"Peace cannot be achieved through violence; it can only be attained through understanding."

(Albert Einstein)

As been stated earlier, the relation between Malaysia and Thailand had been a long historical journey between both nations. After World War 2, as described before, the four states of North Peninsular Malaysia Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan, and Terengganu returned towards the British after Japan's considerable losses in World War 2 campaign (International Boundary Study 1965). In this phase, both nations Malaysia and Thailand, enter a new phase of relation, and the relationship between both neighborhood nations became more robust than before. However, there are several problematic security issues faced by Malaysia, neither Thailand, in their relation. One of Malaysia's issues and Thailand's issues was security and the influence of Communism in both countries. The emergence of Communism in

both countries was seen as threatening Malaysia and Thailand's sovereign, political stability, or security. From these issues that Malaysia and Thailand faced, both countries had to be allied in security against Communism from being influence and gain power in the South East Asian contingent.

As we know, Thailand and Malaysia had been fundamentally related to liberal and westernization theoretical in terms of government governs. British recolonized Malaysia after the end of World War 2. After the end of the war, Thailand had significant influence from westernization and democratic way after being allied towards Britain and other western countries (Darling, C.F 1963). This type of political theory was utterly different between the ideology of Communism and socialism that the Communist Party brings in both countries. Communism and socialism had to be a significant influence in Northern Thailand and Malaysia by communist parties. Furthermore, the victories of Viet Minh and Communist Parties in Vietnam in war campaign against South Vietnam in Vietnam War and Cold War campaign between Democratic/Capitalist route lead up by United States of America against Communist/Capitalist bloc that being influenced by Russia and China in that meantime also being impact towards security and stability of Malaysia and especially Thailand who being a neighborhood with Vietnam in northern and east of Thailand (Thomas, L.M 1986). In this security threat for Malaysia and Thailand, both countries fought to defend their sovereignty as a legitimate government from the Communist insurgent.

After Japan retreated from the occupation, Malaya saw an extremely inhumanity action from Communist guerrilla lead by Chin Peng (Stockwell, J.A 2006). Communist Parties Malaya, led by Chin Peng, used guerrilla tactical to overthrow the government and built a new government by ideology, Communist, and socialism. As the attack from Communist parties accoutred in Malaya, more than 10,000 people, including armies, police, and civilian people, died by Communist Parties Malaya's action until 1989. The emergence of the Communist guerrilla compels the government to have announced an emergency state in 1948 until 1960 to fight against Communist, or local people call "Bintang Tiga." The war against Communist in Malaysia had been called in two-phase, the first phase from 1948 until 1960, and the second phase of emergence occurred from 1968 until 1989 (Weichong, O & Kumar Ramakrishna 2013). In the first phase of emergence, the British launched several tactics to weaken the communist guerrilla, such as appointing more security forces in the borderline and tightening all logistics such as food and garments. Despite Malaya's independence from the British in 1957, an operation against Communist had been continued to protect the new countries' sovereignty and stability until the Cold War ended in 1989.

Furthermore, as well as to maintain stability and also against the threat of Communist in Malaysia, the government in that time had been a pact between four countries, including New Zealand, Australia, and Britain, this pact being called Anglo-Malaysian Defence Agreement. Based on this pact, the countries had been given support towards Malaysia by sending troops, technical specialty, and the other's need to protect Malaysia's security interest. In 1971 the pact had been reconstructed by the name Five Power Defence Arrangements, including Singapore. This country's pact shows us Malaysia's commitment as new countries that gain independence to defend her sovereignty and dignity from the enemy threat.

Thailand was also faced with a security problem by the emergence of communist ideology and Thai parties. As been told earlier, the threat of Communist towards Thailand had come by from Vietnam after Southern Vietnam being invaded by Northern Vietnam. Unlike Malaysia, that being faced with Communism as early 1945, Thailand was threatened by Communist Parties Thailand (CPT) in an insurgency in 1965 (Thomas, L.M 1986). Like communist parties in Vietnam that get support from China, CPT also got support from China and several other communist parties in the region such as Vietnam and Loa to increment the capability of CPT. This support including weapon, ammunition, food, and technical specialty in guerrilla warfare. Assistance from China towards Communist Parties Thailand intends to weaken the Thailand government's strength and influence Thailand's people. Their government was being an American puppet in the campaign against the communist movement in Vietnam.

Through the Royal Thai Army (RTA), the Thailand government had made several operations towards CPT to secure Thailand's security interest (Bergin.B 1982). Thailand also made a treaty with seven other countries called the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). The treaty was signed in Manila in 1954 (Burzynski. L 1984). Member of this treaty, such as the United States of America, Australia, New Zealand, Filipina, Pakistan, France, and the United Kingdom (Braibanti. R 1957). This treaty fundamentally aims to ensure the interest of security and sovereignty of Southeast Asian contingent being independent and counter any insurgence that can threaten countries' stability. Although Malaysia and Thailand had to make a different pact to counter Communist insurgence in both countries, it did not obstruct Malaysia and Thailand from collaborating against the communist insurgence (Thomas, L.M 1977).

As written before, communist insurgents in Malaysia and Thailand implement guerrilla warfare tactics against both countries. Communist parties in Malaysia focused on appointing positions in North Peninsular Malaysia after the Malaysian government announced the second emergence while CPT focused on Northern Thailand. For communist parties in Malaysia, this position had been seen as an advantage for them to reposition, aid, and reinforce their troops and ammunition. Besides that, Communist Parties Malaysia's position at North Peninsular Malaysia and Southern Thailand became a considerable security threat for Malaysia and Thailand boundaries. From this action, Malaysia had launched cooperation with Thailand's authority to paralyze the communist activity, especially between both countries' borders. One of the early steps of cooperation between both countries was to establish Regional Border Committee Office held in Songkhla. Besides that, both authority also made observations of joint activities. Furthermore, to

strengthen the cooperation against communist activity in the border, both governments had signed a new agreement of boundary in Bangkok in 1977:

"Brought about a new era of border cooperation between the two countries. Both signatories are determined to take effective measures to counter and eliminate the Communist Terrorists and members of their related organizations along the Malaysian and Thai border and to intensify their cooperation on other matters about their mutual interests in order to find effective solutions to problems arising from that place".

(Mahmud Embong 2003)

From this agreement, we can see both governments Malaysia and Thailand committed to making cooperation to counter the threat of Communist Terrorists in Southern Thailand and Northern Malaysia. Furthermore, based on the agreement, plenty of cooperation between both countries' security forces was established. One joint operation was called "*Op Selamat Sawadee*" (Nor Ibrahim Sulaiman & Rohani Abd Ghani 2016). This operation started from 1978 until 1980. It covers surveillance control for both countries.

Furthermore, both security forces work closely in this operation, such as shared intelligence information and joint control in the borderline. Besides the joint operation against Communist Terrorists, the close relationship between both countries also can be interpreted on the Hat Yai Accords 1989 between Malaysia, Communist Parties Malaysia (CPM), and Thailand government itself. On this three-eyed meeting held at Hat Yai, the Government of Thailand played as a host of that meeting. On that day, CPM had agreed to capitulate insurgence and agree on the Government of Malaysia (Hack. K 2011).

Despite the joint operation against Communist Terrorists, the good relationship between both governments can be understood on the issues formation Federal of Malaysia in 1963 between Malaya, Sabah, Sarawak, and Singapore. In this effort by the Government of Malaya that was led by Tunku Abdul Rahman, two neighborhood Southeast Asian countries Indonesia and the Philippines, saw the effort of the formation of new countries that been named by Malaysia was a threat to their sovereignty and security interest for them. Through President Macapagal, the Philippines saw Malaya and North Borneo (Sabah) formation as a new form of colonization from Malaya towards Sabah. The Philippines saw Sabah as one of their sovereign lands stated in a historical perspective. There was an agreement between the Sultan of Sulu, Baron Overbeck, and Alfred Dent in 1878 (Jacobini, H, B 1964). In that agreement on behalf of the British North Borneo Company, Baron Overbeck and Alfred Dent agreed with the Sultan of Sulu to pay 5000 dollars a year towards the Sultan of Sulu to lease a portion of North Borneo (Sabah).

On the other hand, Indonesia also saw an effort to form Malaysia as neo-colonization in South East Asian contingent and threaten his countries. Furthermore, Indonesia, through his foreign minister Dr. Subandrio had been declared confrontation on 20 January 1963 :

"We cannot but adopt a policy of confrontation towards Malaya because at present they represent themselves as accomplices of neo-colonialist and neo imperialist force pursuing a policy hostile towards Indonesia."

(Nurliana Suhaimi & Aimi Khairunisa 2016)

As well as been announced by Indonesia foreign minister towards Malaysia, Indonesia had launched an attack towards North Borneo and the State of Johor as against the idea of formation Federal of Malaysia (Leifer. M 1965). However, this confrontation policy ended in 1966 after several talks between both governments (Budiawan 2017).

On these issues of forming the Federal of Malaysia between the Philippines and Malaysia, Thailand put massive effort towards the peace talks between Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines. It can saw in the establishment of the Association of Southeast Asian States (ASA) or more commonly been known as the Bangkok Declaration where it brings the leader of Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand to have three-eyed meeting and negotiation about the cooperative partnership and build an understanding between the countries (Jacobini, H, B 1964). From that declaration, the tension between Malaysia and the Philippines in the issues of North Borneo had been reduced. Besides the effort of the government of Thailand to put Malaysia and Philippines leader at one table to discuss the problems and issues of formation Malaya, Sabah, and Sarawak, Thailand also by his foreign minister put a considerable effort to bring the tension between Malaysia and Indonesia into the peace talk (Kobkua Suannathat-Pian 2002). After several meetings between both leaders of countries that being host by Thailand, the confrontation, issues had been reduced, and in 1966 Indonesia by his new foreign minister, Adam Malik, had been agreed to bring the end of action against Malaysia (Leifer. M 1966). From this effort from Thailand's government to build a good relation between Malaysia and the other Southeast Asian countries in the formation of Federal Malaysia in 1963, it interpreted the excellent relation between Malaysia and Thailand to build a peace and prosperity contingent.

Finally, we can clearly understand the action against communist terrorists after the end of the 2nd World War until the late 80'. Also, Malaysia's issue formation had been grown stronger. The relation between Malaysia and Thailand in terms of security for both countries, especially for Malaysia, is Malaysia's formation.

#### 4. Third Phase: End of Cold War Until Nowadays

After the collapse of the Communist in the Cold War and a sign on Hat Yai accords in 1989 between the Government of Malaysia and Communist Parties Malaya, it witnesses a new phase and chapter of the relation between Thailand and Malaysia. As well stated in the first and second phases, both countries had been through many security issues and acted together to ensure Malaysia and Thailand's security interests and sovereignty were maintained and in the right term. In this phase, relation Malaysia and Thailand enter a new chapter and a new issue, especially in security for both neighborhood countries. One of the issues that tint in the third phase of relation was the separatism movement in Southern Thailand, which has also been an enormous threat for Thailand or Malaysia (Funston, J 2010). The conflict of separatism movement in Southern Thailand has been fundamental reliable causes by the agreement between the Siam Empire and British Colonial in 1909 or also been known as Anglo-Siamese Treaty 1909 has been written in the first phase (Forbes, A.W.D 1986). The agreement introduced a new boundary line between Siam and Malaya until today, where British Colonial governed the North Malaya State, such as Kedah, Kelantan, Perlis, and Terengganu. Meanwhile, the other Malay Muslim state such as Yala, Narathiwat, and Songkhla remain under Siam Empire. The agreement also greatly impacted various contexts such as culture, society, security, politics, and religion, especially in Southern Thailand from the early 20th Century until today (Mullins, M.T 2009).

Southern Thailand province, such as Yala, Narathiwat, and Songkhla, was the majority Malay Muslim with an estimated over 70 percent population in that province was the Malay-Muslim community. Meanwhile, the other province in Thailand and the authority of the government of Thailand was Siam-Buddhism. With this difference of ethnic and religion between Southern Thailand and the other province in Thailand, it made up ethnic-conflict between Malay Muslims in Southern Thailand and the Thailand Government's authority until today. The ethnic-conflict in Southern Thailand was not a new story. It can be traced back to the early 19th Century when the Siam Empire had been placed the Kingdom of Pattani or also been known by the name "Patani Raya or Negara Patani Darussalam" directly under the control of the Siam Empire despite being indirectly control before that (Ahmad Amir 2008) (Koch, L.M 1977). With direct control from Bangkok, the Kingdom of Pattani must obey the rule of law that is obligated from the authority, such as implemented of Siam culture, language, and education towards the Malay-Islam community in Southern Thailand (Syed Serajul Islam 1998). With this implemented a new set of rules towards the Malay-Islam community, it testifies the Thailand government's effort in that mean time to influence and hegemony the community in the Southern Thailand culture as same as the other community in Thailand.

The Thailand government's effort to implement the new set of rules towards the Malay-Muslims community in Southern Thailand harmed Thailand's security at that time until today. The Malay-Muslim community was held from confrontation and refused to obey the government's set of rules. To control the struggle from the Malay-Muslim community government of Thailand had drafted and implemented the Education Act in 1921. (Sathian Mala Rajo & Rafidah Datu 2006). With this implement of an act, it trusted that the government's effort to replace the Malay-Muslim community's education system was based on the Muslim education and Malay language towards secular education based on Siam language as intermediate language in the school. Despite that, many more set rules of law were set by the government of Thailand towards the Malay-Muslim community to legitimate their power and authority in the Southern Thailand province.

However, the Muslim community in Southern Thailand saw the government's effort to implement the new set rule of law to erode the community's value. There is action from the Malay-Muslim community towards Governments of Thailand as been discourse before. During action towards governments was lead up by Haji Sulong in 1948. Haji Sulong was an Islamic scholar in Southern Thailand and was respected by many people in South Thailand. He was also vocal to bring the voice and right of the Muslim community in South Thailand towards Bangkok's authority (Storey, I 2008). However, the effort to bring autonomous right to the Malay-Muslim community was rejected by the authority. It turned to sluggish action where riot and rebellion occurred with hundreds of Malay-Muslim community been dead. Despite this action that leads up by Haji Sulong, several separatist groups had emerged against the Government of Thailand as response action towards the effort of Thailand's authority to assimilate majority Malay-Muslim in Southern Thailand towards Siam-Buddhism culture.

Among the separatist group that being emerge to against the Government of Thailand was Pattani United Liberation Organization (PULO), the *Barisan Revolusi Nasional* (BRN), the *Gerakan Mujahideen Islam Patani* (GMIP) and *Barisan Bersatu Kemerdekaan Patani* or also been known as BERSATU (Vatikiotis, M 2006). This separatist group actively moves the action against Thailand's security forces to regain independence and interest in the Malay-Muslim community in Southern Thailand. However, the confrontation had been slowed down as well; they implemented the new policy where the Government of Thailand was seen more soft towards the Malay-Muslim community in 1980 (Storey, I 2008). However, the confrontation against the Government of Thailand continues. It was peaked in the early 21st Century after the decline of confrontation action against the government in 1990.

This regaining action had been believed by the implementation of the policy by the Government of Thailand that tightened the rule of law and the influence of the Jihadi movement in other Muslim countries such as Al-Qaeda and the Taliban sentiment of self-autonomous state (Mullins, M.T 2009). This separatist group has run many actions, such as destruction toward government school, teacher, and innocent civilian whom Muslims or Buddhists were murdered and

tortured. Furthermore, this barbaric action can also be seen clearly by the massacred and bombing of public properties and the inhumanity such as beheaded Buddhism civilian and monk (Omar Farouk Bajunid 2009). The action against the Government of Thailand that been launched by the separatist group. The peaked of action on this conflict was in 2004 when the Government of Thailand security forces had killed six protestors who attended a demonstration outside the local police station in Tak Bai, one of Narathiwat province towns. Meanwhile, the security forces killed six men, hundreds of protestors at that time been detained by security forces and bring them to an army base in Thailand (Storey, I 2008). According to a reliable source, over seventy protestors detained by the army had been dead (Funston, J 2010).

After the action in Tak Bai, the confrontation between the Government of Thailand and the Malay-Muslim separatist group had been increased dramatically. Plenty of fight and killed action happens that time across the three provinces in Southern Thailand, which majority population by Malay-Muslim community. For Malaysia, this intense action between Thailand's security forces and the Malay-Muslim separatist group was inhumanity and a threat to Malaysia's security interest. The action occurs near the border of Malaysia and Thailand. Despite that, the linkage between the separatist group in South Thailand and terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah (J.I.) gained a threat to Malaysia's security interest. This terrorism group can use the close relationship between the community of Malay-Muslim in South Thailand to influence Malay-Muslim in North Malaysia (Liow, J.C 2006).

Besides that, Malaysia also saw the confrontation in South Thailand as a considerable threat to her sovereignty. The separatist group can easily cross the border between the countries and used Malaysia to regain its capability and influence before against Thailand's Government. This action also opens the chances of an irresponsible party to smuggle weapons and ammunition in Malaysia and indirectly increase Malaysia's security. Based on this threat towards Malaysia sovereign and the close relation between Malaysia and Thailand government, it can be seen Malaysia had put an effort to closed down the confrontation between the Government of Thailand and Malay-Muslim separatist groups.

As stated before, Malaysia and Thailand shared a long historical journey and relation in terms of security. As well as the neighborhood countries of Thailand, Malaysia had put a step forward to bring down the confrontation that happens in a long time. One of the efforts that can be saw was "Langkawi Peace Talk." The talk was held at Langkawi, Kedah, and attended by General Vaipot Srinual, the Director of Intelligence Agency Thailand. The separation group of Malay-Muslim Southern Thailand was BERSATU, PULO, *Barisan Pembebasan Islam Patani*, and *Gerakan Mujahideen Islam Patani* (GMIP) (Mohd Roslan & Hamidah Jalani 2017). Tun Mahathir organized this talk between the two parties that were happening in two days. Before the "Langkawi Peace Talk," Tun Mahathir has also organized a secret meeting between the authority of the Government of Thailand and the leader of the separation group as well as an early step to bring the two parties into peace talk (Khadijah Md Khalid & Seong Wei Loh 2017). There are several understandings held, such as "Peace Negotiate Draft Phase One" and also Joint Peace and Development Plan for Southern Thailand." This peace talk between two parties in confrontation organized by Tun Mahathir clearly shows the Malaysian Government's commitment to bring stability and peace towards South Thailand and not be left behind the Southeast Asian contingent.

Despite the peace talks in Langkawi, there are several other commitments from the Government of Malaysia to ensure that both countries' security interest in the boundary line has been maintained and stable. One of the efforts was the establishment task force between Malaysia and Thailand. With this establishment, both governments closely cooperate to bring down the fundamental problem of separation group in South Thailand that is education. As been known before, Southern Thailand implemented a conservative style of education that completely different from the other province of Thailand. With this cooperative partnership, both governments focused on bringing education towards the Malay-Muslim community and then bringing down the tension and inequality of literacy between the Malay-Muslim community and the other Thailand community. This effort from both government to bring education towards the Malay-Muslim community can be seen as a fundamental step towards peace and stability contingent South Thailand.

Furthermore, the Government of Malaysia continued to show the commitment to bring the South Thailand contingency downed by the official visit of Najib Razak, who the Prime Minister of Malaysia in 2009. With this visit, plenty of discussion between both governments was held, such as economy, development, security, and conflict. This visit from the highest level of Malaysia's Government showed in clearly picture the commitment that Malaysia showed to bring down the problematic issue between the South Thailand community and the Government of Thailand (Mohd Mizan Aslam 2012). Besides that, both police from both countries also have cooperative partnerships against criminals to ensure the security of both countries, especially in the boundary line at the highest level.

Based on this commitment, both governments in cooperative partnership and understanding to bring South Thailand into the peace and development province phase showed the excellent relation between Thailand and Malaysia achieved in the second phase of relation. With the partnership and understanding commitment, we can understand both governments took the issues of both countries' security interests seriously.

## 5. Conclusion

Malaysia and Thailand shared a lot of long historical journey and relation, s been written before in the first phase of relation to both countries had been a form of relationship as an early 15th century when the contact and investment between Malacca and Siam Empire happen. Many of the goods had been exchanged between both empires and showed a good relationship between the parties. This good relation continues afterward, with both countries work closely to against the communist insurgency after the end second world war. Besides that, both countries' good relation was gained by the commitment from both countries in working together against separation group in South Thailand and brought development in the southern Thailand province. With this commitment and partnership by both countries to build a good relationship, it positively impacts both countries' security interests. They are also allied to fight against terrorism or any other crime that can threaten each other sovereign.

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