

## THE ROLES OF DIASPORA COMMUNITY IN INDONESIA - TAIWAN RELATIONS

**Tonny Dian Effendi**

*Department of Internasional Relations, Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia;  
Taiwan Fellowship Awardee, Center for Chinese Studies, National Central Library, Taiwan*

**ABSTRACT:** *This article describes the potential roles of diaspora community in Indonesia and Taiwan relations. Diaspora community is important to Indonesia and Taiwan relations in the context of people to people and business to business relations as back bone of Indonesia and Taiwan relations since there is no diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Taiwan. Indonesian diaspora has potential roles in number, and Taiwanese diaspora (overseas Chinese) has potential in investment and trade. However, Indonesian diaspora still handled as non-government organization, while Taiwan already have special institution to handle it in the context of overseas community relations. Diaspora play important roles to spread information and develop positive image of the country, but it still need to improve common understanding between Taiwanese and Indonesian vice versa. This non-government relation may spill over to the higher level relations in term of government relations.*

**KEYWORDS:** Diaspora, Relations, Indonesia, Taiwan.

## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia and Taiwan, historically maintain relations since years ago. The nature of Indonesia and Taiwan relations was based on people to people relations, and mainly in business which conducted by overseas Chinese. The absence of diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Taiwan doesn't mean the relations become low or unstable. They established the trade and economic office in Jakarta and Taipei. Those offices represent Indonesian and Taiwan interest but doesn't mean like "normal embassy" as other country have. It mainly related with economic relations, and sometime in social and culture but not indicating political relations. In 1971, Taiwan government established the representative office namely "Taiwan Chinese Chamber of Commerce". Then, it changed the name to be "Taiwan Economic and Trade Office (TETO)" in 1989 until today. While Indonesian government established Indonesian Chamber of Trade (KADIN, *Kamar Dagang Indonesia*) in Taipei in 1970 and changed the name to be the Indonesian Trade and Economic Office (KDEI, *Kantor Dagang dan Ekonomi Indonesia*) in 1994 until today.

Now, according to TETO, the total of trade between Indonesia and Taiwan in 2009 was 8,425 million US Dollar. This trade placed Indonesia as the eleventh largest Taiwan trade partner. While, the total Taiwan investment to Indonesia in 2009 was 13,856 million US Dollar and placed Taiwan as the eighth largest investor for Indonesia. In education, there are 2,275 Indonesian students study in many Taiwan universities. This number placed Indonesia as the third largest international student in Taiwan after Vietnam and Malaysia. Taiwan is also as one of favorite destination for Indonesian worker. The number of Indonesian worker in Taiwan is the largest foreign worker in Taiwan.

Globalization today brings the people relations are become more complex and create cross border relations easier, where political barriers is not very significant. Globalization makes the

state's border become less significant, and creates involvement of the non-state actors in international relations in the term of transnational relations. The non-state actors develop their relations with the state or non-state actors beyond state border. Indonesia and Taiwan relations are growing in the non-political condition but dominated by people relations. This people relations, as non-state actor, creates transnational relations between Indonesia and Taiwan and one of them is diaspora community. Diaspora community is placed as non-state actors in the term of transnationalism (Rainer and Faist (ed), 2010). Religious, ethnic, national groups and communities are related with diaspora, and when they are as social formations connect each other, this connection called transnational. So, transnational actually is wider than diaspora because its scope is included all of connection or relations beyond the state border more than the term included in diaspora concept such as business network or social movement.

Dino Patti Djalal, former spokesman of President SBY and Indonesian Ambassador to United States, introduces the concept of Indonesian diaspora. In 2012, there was the First Congress of Indonesian Diaspora in Los Angeles, United States and the second was in Jakarta. This idea influencing many Indonesian citizen and Indonesian descent around the world to create the groups in the country where they live and support this international network. Based on the first Indonesian Diaspora congress in 2012, Indonesian Diaspora are Indonesian citizen who live in foreign countries, foreign citizen but they have Indonesian descendant, and individual with Indonesia's linkage. In Taiwan, the Taiwan chapter of Indonesian Diaspora, namely Indonesian Diaspora Network-Taiwan, has been established in January 27, 2013. This network has established with KDEI support and in the meeting some of groups of Indonesian support this idea. The groups come from some representative organization like *Garuda Indonesia*, *KITA*, *AHCC*, *IOCA*, *IC3T*, *IPC*, *PKPU*, *Majalah Holiday*, *Salima*, *MTYT*, *APIT*, *IMIT*, *GBI Taiwan*, *Gereja Anugerah*, *ROCK Ministry*, *At-Taqwa*, *PCI-NU*, *KMIT*, *Majalah Intai*, *Forum Lingkar Pena*, *Majalah Salam*, *PT. Paladin International*, *IPIT*, *UT-Taiwan*, *FORMMIT*, *Majalah TIM*, *Gereja Air Hidup*, *NTUST-ISA*, *Al-Ikhlas*, *UNIMIG*, and *PPI-Taiwan*.

While in Indonesia, TETO mentions that there are some organizations related with Taiwan in Indonesia. They are like the Association of Taiwan alumni in many cities in Indonesia and united into the Association of Taiwan Alumni Indonesia. In business they also established the Taiwan Business Club in Jakarta, Surabaya, Bandung, Cirebon, Batam and other cities. TETO as the representative of Taiwan in Indonesia also manage good relations with those organizations. Chinese Indonesian also have special position because some of them still maintaining relations with Taiwan. In other hand Taiwan also includes some of them as overseas Chinese, a community that Taiwan want to keep relations. Historically and culturally, part of Chinese Indonesian has relations with Taiwan (Liu, 2011). This cultural relation can be divided into two groups. First is the group of Indonesian Chinese who have cultural background or ancestors relate with Taiwan. Or those who come from the family who have emotional feeling politically with Taiwan. The second group is the group of alumni of Taiwan's schools or universities. The number of Taiwan alumni in Indonesia is also significant.

This article focuses on the roles of Indonesian diaspora and Taiwan diaspora in Indonesia and Taiwan relations. According to description above, this articles describe the diaspora community in each country and also their potential role, their relations with government body and discussion about recommendation to enhance their roles. It identifies and analyzes the roles, pattern, similarity and differences among them in Indonesia-Taiwan relations.

## METHODOLOGY

It is a qualitative research. The data was collected by interview for primary data, and analyses to secondary data as come from books, journals and internet. Interviews done to some scholars in Taiwan and Indonesia and also data from organizations like TETO, KDEI, Diaspora Indonesia Network-Taiwan, Indonesian student association in Taiwan and the Association of Taiwan alumni are as primary data. While the secondary data comes from news, internet and also journal.

### Diaspora

Diaspora is interesting subject in international relations studies both as object and also subject. Lahneman explains that diaspora had ability to be international affairs actors when they can organize their influence power (Lahneman, 2005). Yossi Shain and Aharon Barth argue that diaspora is the independent (non-state) actor which can influence their homeland's foreign policy. They use both liberal and constructivism approach to explain it where the liberal approach describe diaspora as the domestic politics phenomena and constructivism explain diaspora in the context of identity (Shain and Barth, 2003). In this context, Shain and Barth explain that diaspora can be active or passive on their influence toward both home and host country's foreign policy. Paokholal Haopkip mentions that diaspora influences in state's diplomacy because of its role as agency in foreign policy. While Latha Varadarajan explains that diaspora is the phenomena of domestic abroad in international relations where the countries place their diaspora community as a new constituency that connected to the institutional structure of the states. In this context, diaspora is placed not only as part of larger deterritorialized nation (Varadarajan, 2010).

The home country like to put them domestically as part of the nation, but let them help to develop home from outside by developing the sense as part of the nation. The consciousness of the home country about the importance of diaspora community also happen in some countries. When Vicente Fox Quesada elected as president of Mexico in 2000, he involved the Mexicans lived in other countries, especially in United States, as part of Mexico, people who he governed. He also asks all of the Mexico consulates and embassies in around the world to be not only representative of the Mexican state, but also as the allies for Mexicans immigrant's right (Varadarajan, 2010). In 2003, Indian government held an event to attracting Indian diaspora by celebrating the *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas* (Day of the Indian abroad). This event is not only as celebration but also a recognition toward Indian diaspora but also the starting of new phenomena that want to build, is *Vishwa Bharati* (Global India).

However, the diaspora also influences the host country policy by lobby. Michel S Laguerre argues that there are three factors which influence the diasporic lobbying toward host country (Laguerre, 2006). First is how do the diasporic group engage host country's politics on the behalf of the home country on the motivation to help, undermine or consolidate the political regime of the homeland. Second is the interaction of diasporic group with host country's political actors and institution. And third is the interaction of diasporic group with home country's political actors and institution. On his study on Haitian diasporic group lobby in United States, he argues that Haitian diasporic tried to influence the policy making process in both informal lobbyist, who are not paid by the home land and just engaged on the basis of their citizenship right, and official diasporic lobbyist who are formally recognized lobbyist and paid by foreign government to represent the country abroad. While on the study toward Armenian and Jewish diaspora's influences toward home country, Yossi Shain and Aharon Barth argues that the influence toward

home country foreign policy decision making can be done by engaging with the domestic politics, where in other hand they are regarded by home country as integral part of the kin community and strives to cultivate their supports (Shain and Barth, 2003).

### **Indonesia and Taiwan relations**

Indonesia and Taiwan do not have diplomatic relations. The relations between them have been managed by the trade and economic office both in Jakarta and Taipei. Taiwan government established the Taiwan Economic and Trade Office (TETO) in Jakarta, while Indonesian government established the Indonesian Chamber of Economic Office (KDEI/*Kantor Dagang dan Ekonomi Indonesia*) in Taipei. TETO aims to facilitate relations between Taiwan and Indonesia which are done in some division like public affairs which responsible on the relations with government, parliament, NGO and promotes cooperation in education, culture, science and technology, agriculture and other. Second is economic division which promotes relation and cooperation in trade and investment between Taiwan and Indonesia. Third is information division which promotes and provides information about Taiwan and TETO to mass media. Fourth is overseas compatriot division which gives service to Taiwanese people and school in Indonesia. And Fifth is services division which responsible in consular matter like visa, travel document, entry permit and working permit to Taiwan.

KDEI had unique history. Indonesian government in the first time established Indonesian office in Taipei by deployed intelligence staff. In 1970, this office became Indonesian Trade Chamber where the staffs were combine between intelligence and immigration. In 1994, it upgraded its level to be Indonesian Economic and Trade Office economic institution with non-government position under control of Ministry of Trade. The main objective of KDEI in Taiwan is to enlarge, enhance and increasing economic and trade cooperation in the wider meaning between Indonesia and Taiwan. Second, as represent and protect Indonesian economic interest and citizen. Third is increasing economic, industry, investment and tourism relations. Fourth, encourage cooperation among business. Fifth is gives services and information, assist marketing of Indonesian export commodities and sixth is market promotion. KDEI had six main field as administration, trade, industry, investment, tourism and transportation, immigration and labour.

Trade and investment are the main activities of Indonesia and Taiwan relations and they play quasi-official relations. It means that although no diplomatic relations, means politically, but it doesn't much affect in economic relations, includes trade and investment cooperation frameworks (Elisabeth & Chaw-Shia, 2014). According to KDEI, total trade between Indonesia and Taiwan gets positive performance.<sup>1</sup> Until September 2015, the total trade between Indonesia and Taiwan was 738,44 million US dollar or increase 6,04% compare in August that about 696,39 million US dollar. However, comparing with the previous year, this amount is decrease. It because of the economic production performance in Indonesia and Taiwan and also influence of stagnant international economic condition which is pushed Indonesia and Taiwan to adjust to US dollar.

However, Indonesia gets surplus in trade balance with Taiwan with total amount about 340 million US dollar or increase 54,73%. This improvement was supported by gas and oil sector which are increasing Indonesian trade balance to Taiwan. Indonesia trade balance with Taiwan from January to September 2015 gets surplus about 2,50 billion US dollar. Those data describe the improvement of trade and economic relations between Indonesia and Taiwan. While

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www2.kdei-taipei.org/index.php/perdagangan>

Indonesian export to Taiwan in September 2015 increase to 539,55 million US dollar. While Indonesia import from Taiwan in September 2015 is decreasing when compare with in August 2015. Indonesia exports to Taiwan is natural gas, coal and gold, while the import from Taiwan is textile and its product, plastic, machinery component, steel and iron. Investment in Indonesia also increasing 16,7% percent in 2015. It includes domestic and foreign investment. Until October 2015, Indonesia becomes the 8<sup>th</sup> Taiwan investment destination with total investment reach 96,43 million US dollar. While Taiwan is the 14<sup>th</sup> foreign investment origin in Indonesia. To develop and enhance investment cooperation between Indonesia and Taiwan, KDEI in Taipei held some activities like business meeting to promote trade and investment to Taiwanese business person like Taiwan International Tea, Coffee and Wine Expo 2015, Taiwan International Fisheries & Seafood Expo 2015, New Taipei City International Sourcing Fair, visitation and meeting with industrial business person like Ryh Chun International Co. Ltd, Grat Sunway Enterprises Ltd, Sun Union International Corp, Industrial Development Bureau, Hsinchu Industrial park Service Center, Hsinchu Science Park Bureau and Kaohsiung Industrial Park Service Center.

Until October 2015, the number of Taiwanese tourist visit Indonesia is about 154,078 persons or increase 4,94% compare with previous year. While Indonesian tourist visit Taiwan until October 2015 reach 14,966 persons or increase 12,84% compare with September 2015. Beside the tourism promotion, easy access in transportation between Indonesia and Taiwan is also supportive factor. TETO noted that there are 100 direct flight between two countries with Taiwanese air company, Eva Air and China Airlines. They are 44 flights from Taipei to Jakarta by China Airlines and Eva Airlines, 38 flights from Taipei to Bali by China Airlines, 4 flights from Taipei to Surabaya by Eva Air, and 14 flights from Taipei to Surabaya via Singapore by China Airlines. In November 2015, Indonesian government released the free visa for Taiwanese tourist to visit Indonesia. This policy will increase the number of Taiwanese tourist to Indonesia.

Indonesia and Taiwan have good opportunity to enhance their economic cooperation to be more comprehensive in the context of economic cooperation agreement (Elisabeth & Chaw-Hsia, 2014). This opportunity is based on some reasons. First, politically, although Indonesia respect to One China Policy principle, but it doesn't mean that Indonesia has to defend China's interest over Taiwan. It seems that the absence of diplomatic relations doesn't mean Indonesia and Taiwan impossible to take economic relations. Second, the good and stable condition in cross-strait relations gives impact to economic development and stability in Taiwan. Third, Indonesia is one of the most country origin of foreign worker in Taiwan. Fourth, the tourism relation is growing positively where the number of Taiwan tourist who visits Indonesia and Indonesian tourist visits Taiwan are increasing. It indicates the trust and also improvement in transportation between Indonesia and Taiwan.

### **Indonesian Diaspora in Taiwan and Taiwan Diaspora in Indonesia**

The concept of diaspora is relatively new for Indonesian. Dino Patti Djalal, former Indonesian ambassador to United States, Deputy of Indonesian Foreign Minister and president SBY spokesperson, is the founded of Indonesia Diaspora Network and introduce the concept of Indonesian diaspora. Dino argues that Indonesian diaspora are the people related to Indonesia who living abroad. They are Indonesian citizen living abroad, ex-Indonesian citizen or foreign citizen with Indonesian descent, and also foreign citizen link to Indonesia because of their profession or interest. According to this definition, Indonesian diaspora become so broad and include many characters. In the context of Indonesian diaspora in Taiwan, they can be included

Indonesian migrant worker, student, marriage migrant, Indonesian descent, and also scholars or Taiwan citizen link to Indonesia. It should be a big number of Indonesian diaspora in Taiwan.

According to Dino's definition, Indonesian diaspora in Taiwan is very important for Indonesia and Taiwan relations. Since, Indonesia and Taiwan don't have diplomatic relations, the people to people relations become the back bone of the relations and Indonesian diaspora playing important roles on it. No diplomatic relations will impact in some problems, but the people to people relations brings some solutions for those problem in the non-state relations level. Dino said that in his meeting with President Ma Ying-Jeou, President Ma explained that the existence of Indonesian who living in Taiwan is significant, mainly for Taiwan economy. The big number of Indonesian migrant worker in formal and informal sector are important to support Taiwan economy.

Taiwan is one of favourite destination for Indonesian worker. Data from TETO shows that in 2007 the number of Indonesian migrant worker in Taiwan reach 140,000 persons and placed Indonesian migrant worker as the most and Indonesia become the first place of foreign migrant worker origin country among Southeast Asian countries.<sup>2</sup> According to National Body for Indonesian Worker Placement and Protection (BNP2TKI/ *Badan Nasional Penempatan dan Perlindungan Tenaga Kerja Indonesia*), until 31 October 2015, the number of Indonesian migrant worker in Taiwan is 63,416 persons which is 15, 485 male and 47,931 female.<sup>3</sup> 20,438 of them are working in formal sector, while 42, 978 in informal sector. In other hand, the number of Indonesian student in Taiwan also growing. According to Iman Adipurnama, the chairman of Indonesian Student Association (PPI/*Perhimpunan Pelajar Indonesia*) in Taiwan, the number of Indonesian student in Taiwan reach 3000 students, who spreading around Taiwan. He says that the number of Indonesian student in Taiwan is significant and give positive impact to spread out information about Indonesia including introduce Indonesian culture toward Taiwanese. Wendy Chang, the chairman of PERPITA, another Indonesian student association in Taiwan, argues that people to people relations bring positive impact to Indonesia and Taiwan relations. Taiwanese government and society become more respect and accept them positively and there are many things can be learnt from Taiwan society. In the context of relations with Indonesian and Taiwan institution, Indonesian student organizations maintain good relations with TETO and KDEI and those institutions give good support to them. Rangga Aditya Elias, former chairman of PPI, mentions that Indonesian student in Taiwan has potential roles as "cooperation agent" to strengthening Indonesia and Taiwan relations (Elias, 2013). As potential agent to bridging Indonesia and Taiwan relations, Indonesian student need support from both governments to improve and develop epistemic community between two countries (Paramitaningrum, 2013).

Table 1. Number of Indonesian Student in Taiwan (2010-2014)

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
<b>Total</b>	2,275	2,300	2,700	2,723	3,455

Source: China Town Magazine, 94 Edition/ VIII/ August 2015

Total Indonesian living in Taiwan is about 1% of total population in Taiwan. This number is significant to spread information about Indonesia to Taiwanese and about Taiwan to Indonesian

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.roc-taiwan.org/ID/ct.asp?xItem=144651&CtNode=9323&mp=292&xp1=>,

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.bnptki.go.id/read/10751/Data-PENEMPATAN-TKI-Berdasarkan-NEGARA-Periode-1-JANUARI-S.D-31-OCTOBER-2015-.html>

as well. The problem now is how to manage those potential to get positive impact or benefits. He suggested that Indonesian migrant worker and student strengthening their consideration as Indonesian to give positive information toward Taiwanese and also their families and friends in Indonesia. Then, they can act as facilitator to facilitate the relations between them. On other hand, Indonesian government should concern with diaspora issue to place them as partner in strengthening relations with host country like Taiwan. The government institution related with Indonesian diaspora is urgent now. While Professor Dewi Fortuna Anwar, deputy of Indonesian Vice President Secretariat said that Indonesian migrant worker have important roles to give description about Indonesia. It is related with image of Indonesia because they living directly with Taiwanese society. Student also get similar experience because they are living and touching Taiwanese daily life. They can share and describe Indonesian culture to Taiwanese. In other hand, they should learn and share the positive culture of Taiwanese to Indonesian people. They can share the information about living in Taiwan, opportunity like working opportunity and scholarship and exchange program. While toward Taiwanese, they can introduce their origin place to give information that Indonesia is not only Bali but Indonesia is a big country with diversity of ethnic and culture. In this context, Dino and Dewi have same opinion that Indonesian diaspora in Taiwan have important roles in Indonesia and Taiwan relations, mainly to develop Indonesian image, transfer knowledge and facilitate the people to people relations.

There is Indonesian diaspora network chapter in Taiwan. Deyantono is the founding and also the chairman of this organization. In the interview with him, Deyantono argued that the most spirit that inspire him to active and founding Indonesian diaspora network in Taiwan is because of Indonesianism spirit. Indonesian diaspora is open to all of people who concern to Indonesia, both Indonesian and non-Indonesian citizen. It is uniting all of Indonesian living in Taiwan with different background and activities to stand together discussing about Indonesian future. Indonesian diaspora has important role in Indonesia and Taiwan relations in two points. First, in internal context, Indonesian diaspora open new horizon and perspective to view Indonesianism and uniting Indonesian people in Taiwan from different background (worker, student, origin place, religion, etc). With the spirit of Indonesianism, then Indonesian diaspora recognizing them as the same potential people for Indonesia and encourage them to be productive in their activities in Taiwan. It will not only give impact to their selves but also develop good image of Indonesia on Taiwanese eyes. Second, externally, Indonesian diaspora in Taiwan have important roles to introduce Indonesia to Taiwanese through many activities like culture expo and other activities.

When Indonesian diaspora definition is more practical, Taiwan diaspora definition is relative cultural. I define Taiwan diaspora in the context of the relations between Taiwan government with what they called overseas Chinese. So, I just think that Taiwan diaspora here as overseas Chinese in the context of Taiwan government. TETO in Jakarta has special division in their relations with Chinese oversea in Indonesia. They called in *Bahasa Indonesia* as “*Tionghoa perantau*”. According to the TETO website in Jakarta, the overseas Chinese division aims to manage relations with about 1 million overseas Chinese in Indonesia. They are divided into four group. First is overseas Chinese who spread and divided in many groups as family, clan, culture, origin place, education and religion. Second, the Taiwan alumni group. Third is Taiwanese business person and fourth is family of Taiwanese business person and Taiwanese worker in Indonesia. In one of media interview, the representative of TETO in Jakarta, Andrew Hsia mentioned that the number of Taiwanese in Indonesia is about 10,000 people.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.thepresidentpost.com/2012/03/02/taiwan-and-indonesia-to-enhance-economic-relations/>

In the context to handle diaspora relations, different with Indonesia, Taiwan has special institution to handle their relations with their diaspora community. It called Overseas Community Affairs Council (OCAC).<sup>5</sup> It was founded since 1926 and in 2012 there was a restructure and then this institution become as ministry level with five departments as policy research and development, overseas Chinese network services, overseas Chinese education, overseas Chinese business, overseas Chinese student counselling. This institution has comprehensive role to manage and handle the relations with overseas Chinese from around the world. In Indonesia, the branch of this institution is bounded with TETO. OCAC has important task to maintain relation with overseas Chinese around the world. In the economic sector, there is a program to assist overseas Chinese business person including in Indonesia by give credit loan. Since 1989 until 2013, there was 95 cases to overseas Chinese business person in Indonesia to with financing amount 52,360,000 US dollar and guarantee amount 31,005,000 US dollar. In 2013, there are 5 cases with financing amount 5,250,000 US dollar and guarantee amount 2,932,000 US dollar. To introduce Taiwan to youth overseas Chinese, Taiwan government also held study tour for them. The number of overseas Chinese youth Taiwan study tour from Indonesia in 2011 was 260 participants, in 2012 was 231 participants and in 2013 was 214 participants. Taiwan government also held language learning program for Taiwan expatriate where in Indonesia it followed by 82 participants in 2011, 105 participants in 2012 and 87 participants in 2013. Until 2013 there was 1,009 overseas Chinese student registered in Indonesia, it is the second number after Malaysia in Asia level. In the total number for overseas educational and social activities in Indonesia was decreasing from 1 activity in 2007, 32 activities I 2008, 3 activities in 2009 and 1 activity in 2011. While in 2012 and 2013 there was no funded activities.

The OCAC attention toward overseas Chinese is not only for overseas Chinese reside in Indonesia but also in Taiwan. It can be showed in their relations with Perpita. They offer some assistance like scholarship and documents for student who want to continue their education in Taiwan. According to Wendy Chang, the chairman of Perpita, who also National Chengchi University student, Indonesia and Taiwan relations is growing up year to year in many field like in education, trade, tourism and culture. In the context of education, Taiwan government offers many scholarships for Indonesian to study in Taiwan. Wendy argues that according to Taiwan demography condition, when the natality is decreasing, Taiwan need more worker and it open opportunity for job in Taiwan. Taiwan government released new regulation that allow fresh graduate to work. In the context of government relations, Wendy saw that Indonesian policy to give free visa for Taiwanese will give good impact to increase number of Taiwan tourist to Indonesia.

In term of the relation with Indonesian people who have experience with Taiwan, Taiwan government through TETO maintain relations with two important institutions. First is ICATI or *Ikatan Citra Alumni Taiwan se-Indonesia* or United of Taiwan Alumni in Indonesia. It is a Taiwan alumni organization in Indonesia from many schools and campuses in Taiwan (Faradi, 2015). Today this organization is almost 50 years old with 5 thousand Indonesian member. ICATI has important roles to bridge Indonesia and Taiwan relations, mainly in education context. ICATI held some activities like summer camp for student and study tour for head of school in Indonesia. Both programmes will increase knowledge and understanding of the students and teacher about Taiwan. ICATI also gives scholarship for Indonesian student to study in Taiwan for bachelor, master doctorate degree. ICATI also promotes Taiwan education in

---

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ocac.gov.tw/OCAC/Eng/Pages/Detail.aspx?nodeid=418&pid=2355>

Indonesia through Taiwan Higher Education Fair. In 2013, it was followed by 30 Taiwan universities. In 2014, it was followed by 40 universities and in 2015 it was followed by 60 universities. According to Rini Lestari, the chairman of ICATI, this event aims to bridge Indonesian people who want to study in Taiwan by gives information about study in Taiwan including the scholarship. Rini argues that the main roles of ICATI in Indonesia and Taiwan relations is to connecting and bridging between Indonesian society and higher education in Taiwan. ICATI also take cooperation with some Taiwan universities to provide scholarship to prospectus student from Indonesia.

The second organization is Taiwan International Cooperation and Development Fund or ICDF. This organization founded to improve cooperation in economy, social-economy development and human resources between Taiwan and friend country. The core activities of this organization is in investment and funding aid, technical cooperation, humanitarian assistance, and international education and training. The headquarter is in Taipei but it has some representative office abroad including in Indonesia. ICDF Indonesia and Taiwan alumni have important roles to bridging Indonesia and Taiwan relations by provide information about Taiwan to Indonesian people and facilitate the cooperation. According to Arif Misbahul, director of ICDF Indonesia and also Taiwan alumni, Taiwan and Indonesia have many potential cooperation in education, agriculture, and small medium enterprise (SME).<sup>6</sup> In 2014, some local government like in East Java took technical cooperation with Taiwan in agro-tourism cooperation. Arif also actives to give lecturer in seminar and share information about education in Taiwan to Indonesian university student like in Universitas Diponegoro, Centra Java.<sup>7</sup> Even, in November 2015, Arif success to facilitate cooperation between Universitas Veteran Yogyakarta and ICDF.<sup>8</sup>

### Potential Upgrade and Image Development

In the context of diaspora, there are many potential roles that should be played by Indonesian and Taiwanese diaspora. From Indonesian diaspora side, the number population of Indonesian diaspora in Taiwan in one of the big potential. While in Taiwan side, the government already set the institution to handle relations with Taiwanese diaspora in the context of overseas Chinese. If we compare the condition between two countries, Indonesian diaspora seems have big potential in the aspect of number but lack capability in government structure support. While in Taiwan side, they have institutional government support but the number of Taiwanese in Indonesia, even if it includes the total overseas Chinese in Indonesia, would be small number. However, from broader view, it is true and fact that people to people and business to business relations are the back bone of Indonesia and Taiwan relations.

Table 2. Indonesian and Taiwanese (overseas Chinese) diaspora

	Indonesia	Taiwan
Number (population of diaspora)	Big number (some source mentions it about 1% of total Taiwan population)	Small number (it about 10,000 Taiwanese)
Composition	According to Indonesian diaspora definition by Dino Patti Djalal: Indonesian citizen (migrant worker, student,	According to TETO overseas Chinese division: Taiwan citizen (business person, worker

<sup>6</sup> <http://harianjambi.com/berita-taiwan-siap-jajaki-pengembangan-ragam-potensi-jambi.html>

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.undip.ac.id/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=2980:fakultas-teknik-jajaki-kerjasama-di-taiwan-melalui-icdf&catid=78](http://www.undip.ac.id/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2980:fakultas-teknik-jajaki-kerjasama-di-taiwan-melalui-icdf&catid=78):

<sup>8</sup> <http://krjogja.com/read/282145/icdf-upn-mou-bidang-pendidikan.kr>

	marriage migrant), Indonesian descent (ex-Indonesian citizen, children of Indonesian-Taiwanese marriage), Taiwan citizen link to Indonesia.	and families) and overseas Chinese in Indonesia.
Organization linked	Indonesian Diaspora Network (IDN) – non-government.	Overseas Community Affairs Council, ROK -government. TETO division of overseas Chinese.

However, the different condition of managing diaspora roles in term of Indonesia-Taiwan relation doesn't mean as unsolved problem. From other side, it can be viewed as complementary each other. Indonesia have many potentials in the context of number population, but Taiwan have small number, so they can share each other to introduce, improve knowledge and information to their own people. Indonesia can also learn from Taiwan experience to establish and build special institution to handle diaspora issue, how to develop and maintain their relations with their diaspora. So, both side, from diaspora level (people) and government level can share to improve the role of people to people relations. Both diaspora community have important roles to develop image and common understanding from both side. It begins with the increasing familiarity of Indonesian about Taiwan, and Taiwanese about Indonesia. Then the image should develop in get positive impression. The image relates with how to view and then influence the impression to the country. According to some opinion, Taiwanese knowledge about Indonesia still need to be improved. Even, some of them do not know where is Indonesia. Their main impression about Indonesia is Bali and origin country of migrant worker. So, it should to be improved by collaboration between Indonesian government and people in Indonesia. In frankly speaking, the big number of Indonesian in Taiwan, if every one of them can involve to introduce Indonesia so it will be 1% of Taiwanese will be well know about Indonesia. However, this effort should be managed and trained. Iman said that the improvement of Indonesian image toward Taiwanese should be in line with the good development in Indonesia.

In other hand, how about Taiwan image among Indonesian? I think sometime there is ambiguity among Indonesian to distinguishes Taiwan, China or Hongkong. It is related with Chineseness. Some of Indonesian think that they are same. Second, the image about Taiwan is about the favourite destination of Indonesian migrant worker. It comes from the information brought by Indonesian migrant worker in Taiwan. But it is a limited information. The knowledge about Taiwan position and differences with China and Hongkong, for example still less. In general, or for Indonesian worker, it is not so important, but in the broader context it important for Taiwan diplomacy to explain Taiwan to Indonesian. The need to improve information about Indonesia to Taiwanese and Taiwan to Indonesian is increasing. For Indonesia, may should be think to give skill for Indonesian worker who want to work in Taiwan with skill to introduce Indonesia. However, as KDEI activities to improve Indonesian migrant worker skill as tour guided is also important. This method should be extended to wider participant like student as well. Indonesian migrant worker and student are the important actor to support Indonesia diplomacy in Taiwan. Second, to improve people to people and business to business relations, Indonesia and Taiwan government should explore more and held many events to introduce the country, including maintain good relations with diaspora community. Third, Indonesian tourist promotion should be extended not only in Bali, but to other part of Indonesia. Indonesia should change Bali from final tourist destination of Taiwanese tourist to be a hub tourist destination, so Bali can connect with other area. Fourth, Indonesia and Taiwan government perhaps can adopt

the program by TransAsia Sisters Association program by send the diaspora family to the country to know and learn their parent origin country.

### **Religion and Culture Group**

People to people and business to business relations are the main activities in Indonesia and Taiwan relations. In the context of people to people relations, it creates three form of economic and social-cultural relations (Kabinawa, 2013). They are unofficial, semi-official and official relations. There is big number of Indonesian diaspora di Taiwan, mostly migrant worker and student, and big investment of Taiwan in Indonesia, mostly business person and worker. However, there are other potential group that should be included to improve Indonesia and Taiwan relations. First is religion group. *Yayasan Budha Tzu Chi Indonesia* (Indonesia Tzu Chi Buddhism Foundation) has potential roles in Indonesia-Taiwan relations. Although as religion organization but historically it has special relations with Taiwan. Master Cheng Yen, a founding father of Tzu Chi is Taiwanese and founded the Tzu Chi Budhim Humanitarian Foundation in Taiwan in 1966. This foundation focuses to give help to poor people.in 1993, a Tzu Chi volunteer from Taiwan visited Indonesia and met up with the wife of Taiwanese business person. Then the wife visited Taiwna in 1994 and back to Indonesia to found *Yayasan Budha Tzu Chi Indonesia*. They do many humanitarian activities in Indonesia.<sup>9</sup> Although focuses on religion and humanitarian but this organization also have potential role to give information about Taiwan to Indonesian people and introduce Taiwan through exchange, although limited in their circular member. In other hand, there are many Chinese Muslim in Taipei, where Taipei Grand Mosque as one of their centre of activity. Since Indonesia is the biggest Muslim country in the world, and majority of Indonesian migrant worker in Taiwan are Muslim, so I think it can be potential to improve Indonesia and Taiwan relation in the context of people to people relation through Taiwan and Indonesian Muslim relations. For mostly Indonesian, the Northeast Asia countries are non-Muslim. But they should know that there are local minority Muslim there. The improvement of relations between Taiwanese and Indonesian Muslim will give positive impact from both side. For Taiwan, it will help to explain about Islam, tradition and praying to Taiwanese, and for Indonesia, it will give information that there are Muslims in Taiwan and live safely with their neighbour Taiwanese. Second is cultural organization like Hakka organization. The cultural group also has potential roles to improve Indonesia and Taiwan relations.

Taiwan trade and investment to Indonesia is important one. Many Taiwanese company operated and invest in Indonesia. They can also play important roles, at least to introduce Taiwan to Indonesia. Indonesian are familiar with some Taiwan company like HTC, BenQ, Acer and Asus. I think they can participate to spreading information about Taiwan through CSR program, like student exchange, scholarship. In other hand, the Taiwan pop culture like Taiwan bubble tea also becomes popular in Indonesia. However, it should be followed by explanation or description about Taiwan than just the name of product.

### **CONCLUSION**

Diaspora community play important roles in Indonesia and Taiwan relations in the context of people to people and business to business relations. They become the back bone of Indonesia and Taiwan relations, since there is no diplomatic relations among them. The challenges in the Indonesia and Taiwan relations could be formal and informal. The formal challenge is the absence of diplomatic relations that in some case can be obstacle. But It can be solved by pseudo

---

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.tzuchi.or.id/tentang-kami/tzu-chi-indonesia/48>

diplomacy relations. The informal challenges is about the improvement of the image. Indonesia and Taiwan still need to improve their image and one again diaspora can be one of the important actor. There are some other diaspora communities in Taiwan and Indonesia that should be supported to improve Indonesia and Taiwan relations like religion group as Muslim Taiwan and Tzu Chi Buddhism, and also cultural group like Hakka organization. The roles of diaspora hoped can spill over to the higher level relations and at least increasing the common understanding between Indonesian and Taiwanese.

Finally, discussing about the potential roles of diaspora in Indonesia and Taiwan relation, it can be described that they have big potential and settled but need to be improved and managed. Indonesian diaspora in Taiwan has big potential in term of number, but lack of government institution structure, while Taiwanese diaspora has big potential in term of investment and well managed in government institution structure, but less in number. Those potential would be growing in the future and government should be aware about it. People to people and business to business relations as back bone of Indonesia and Taiwan relations will spill over to wider area including high level as state level. For Indonesia side, perhaps should to considering the concept of pseudo diplomacy as the alternative in government relations.

For the future research, I suggest for other scholars to take research about the potential relations between Indonesia and Taiwan in the context of local government. The local autonomy in Indonesia is growing better and it open the opportunity for local government to make cooperation with local government in other country as sister city or other cooperation. It perhaps also can be done with local government in Taiwan.

### Acknowledgement

This article is part of the research under Taiwan Fellowship program. I thank to Center for Chinese Studies of National Central Library, Taiwan which support and funded this research. And also to Institute of International Relations, National Chengchi University as my host institution which provide many materials.

### REFERENCES

- Elias, Rangga Aditya. (2013). *Invisible Agent in Taiwan-Indonesia Relations*. Paper presented in TASEEAS Conference, May 31st, 2013
- Elisabeth, Andriana & Chaw-Shia Tu (Eds). (2014). *Indonesia-Taiwan Economic Cooperation Arrangement: Is It Feasible?* Jakarta: Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia.
- Faradi, Aziz. (2015). ICATI Jembatan Pendidikan Taiwan-Indonesia. *China Town, Indonesian Chinese Community Magazine, Edition 94/VIII/August 2015*. Jakarta
- Kabinawa, Luh Nyoman Ratih Wagiswari. (2013). Economic and Socio-Cultural Relations between Indonesia and Taiwan: An Indonesian Perspective, 1990-2012. *Journal of ASEAN Studies, Vol.1 No. 2 (2013). Pp. 140-163*
- Lahneman, W. J. (2005). *Impact of Diaspora Communities on National and Global Politics: report on Survey Literatures*. Maryland: University of Maryland
- Leonard, Mark et al., (2002). *Public Diplomacy*. London: The Foreign Policy Centre
- Liu, H. (2011). *China and the Shaping of Indonesia, 1949-1965*. Kyoto: Kyoto University Press.
- Paramitaningrum. (2013). Enhancing People-to-People Cooperation between ASEAN and East Asia Countries Through Counterparts: The Case of Indonesian Student in Taiwan. *Journal of ASEAN Studies. Vol. 1. No. 2 (2013). Pp. 164-175*.

Rainer, Baubock and Faist, Thomas (eds) (2010). *Diaspora and Transnationalism: Concepts, Theories and Methods*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press

Yossi Shain; Aharon Barth. (Vol.57, Summer 2003). Diaspora and International relations Theory. *International Organization* , 452-453.

Varadarajan, Latha. (2010). *The Domestic Abroad: Diaspora in International Relations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press