

The Dutch-East India Company's Letter to Sultan Azimuddin of Buton

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Abstract - *"The letter from the Dutch-East India Company to Sultan Azimuddin" is a form of correspondence between the Dutch and the Buton Sultanate written on February 25, 1791. The manuscript has been digitally documented and has been made into microfilm which is now stored in the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia. The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin consisted of 13 pages and was written in jawi script. The text of the Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin discussed several issues, including violations of the 1766 Contract, debt, illicit trade, Dutch employees, and compensation payments on the ship Rust en Werk. This study was conducted using a qualitative approach. To obtain information about Buton and the Dutch, the content is analyzed using literature review. This study shows the diplomatic relations between the Dutch and Buton at the end of the XVIII century seen in Surat Kompeni kepada Sultan Azimuddin. The Dutch intervened in the sovereignty of the Buton Sultanate, although Buton's sovereignty was strong enough and Buton refused to comply. Nevertheless, the Dutch maintained their diplomatic relations with Buton because the Dutch saw Buton's great potential.*

Keywords - Buton, Sultan Azimuddin, Dutch.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the past, the Buton Sultanate was located in the southeast of Sulawesi. The region stretches from 121°40' east longitude to 124°50' east longitude and extends from 4°20' north latitude to 6°20' south latitude. The area consists of Buton Island, Muna Island, Kabaena Island, small islands around Buton Island and Muna Island, Tukang Besi Islands, Poleang and Rumbia in the southeastern part of Sulawesi (Ligtvoet, 1878).

The Sultan was chosen by *Sio Limbona* (similar to House of Representatives now), not inherited or hereditary. In fact, there was a Sultan who was sentenced to death by wrapping a string around his neck for violating the rules, namely Sultan Mardan Ali (the 8th Sultan). In the period of 1538—1960, there were 38 sultans who had led the Sultanate of Buton. The authority of Sultan Buton encompassed all regions of Southeast Sulawesi Province that consists of 12 regencies/cities, parts of Central Sulawesi Province, such as Luwuk and Banggai, Selayar Island and the surrounding islands (taken from the official website of the Government of Buton District).

Since 1960, Buton became a district located on the southeastern peninsula of Sulawesi. If it is seen from the map of Southeast Sulawesi Province, Buton is geographically situated in the southern part of the equator, extending from north to south between 4.96°--6.25° South Latitude and extending from west to east between 120.00°--123.34° East Longitude, covering parts of Muna and Buton Islands. Buton district borders Muna district in the north, the Flores Sea in the south, Wakatobi district in the east, and Bombana district in the west.

Since the 17th century, the Sultanate of Buton had attracted the attention of the Dutch because of its strategic location. Buton is positioned in the middle of the shipping lane from west to east of the archipelago and flanked by two major powers, namely Gowa in the west and Ternate in the east. Gowa and Ternate, who always tried to expand their territory, were attracted to Buton because of its strategic location and human resources (Zuhdi, 2010:141).

In addition to external threats, Buton also experienced many conflicts from within the sultanate. The countries that were subordinate to Buton, namely Muna and Kalingsusu, often rebelled. Buton also made alliances with the Dutch as an effort to protect themselves from internal and external attacks, and as a form of legitimacy of its sovereignty as a sultanate.

One form of diplomatic relations between Buton and the Dutch was correspondence. The diplomatic relationship was seen in "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin". The letter was sent by a Dutch official (or referred to in the manuscript as the Company) to Sultan Azimuddin, the 25th sultan of Buton. The date of the letter was from 1791 and was written

in Malay using jawi script. Malay was used in the letter because it was the lingua franca in the archipelago (Chambert-Loir and Fathurahman, 1999:131).

The study of other letters and manuscripts from the Sultanate of Buton has not been done much compared to the study of letters from other regions in the archipelago, especially in the eastern part. One of the factors that led to this was the small influence of the Buton Sultanate when compared to the influence of Ternate and Gowa so that the relics of the two sultanates received more attention than those of Buton.

Although small in number, studies on the letters of Buton have been initiated by W. G. Shellabear since the end of the 19th century. Shellabear reviewed a letter written by a kapitalao of Buton in 1667 (Suryadi, 2007). In 2004, Mu'jizah examined the letter from the sultan of Buton who expressed his condolences for the death of King of Bone. In addition, Suryadi also conducted several studies on the letters of Buton, namely in 2005, 2007, 2010 and 2015. The letters studied by Suryadi were letters from the sultans of Buton to the Dutch.

It can be seen that the studies that have been conducted are studies of letters sent by the Sultanate of Buton. There has been no study regarding the letter received by Buton, even though from the correspondence it can be known how diplomatic relations between Buton and the sender of the letter using their point of view. This revelation made an interesting case for "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin" to study. To be used as data, the manuscript of "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin" is transliterated into Latin script with philological works. The transliteration results are used as data.

This paper discusses the diplomatic relations of the Dutch and Buton at the end of the XVIII century as seen in "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin". In the letter, there were numerous issues to discuss, but almost all of them were in the form of cautionary acts because Buton disobey the Dutch. It shows that there was an attempt from the Dutch to interfere with the affairs of the sultanate. In "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin", the image of Buton will also be seen through the perspective of the Dutch. The study was conducted using the method of text content analysis and literature review. For text excerpts, the title of the letter "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin" will be shortened to SKKSA.

II. DISCUSSION

A. *The Manuscript of "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin"*

The manuscript of "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin" was part of the collection of Abdul Mulku Zahari (Ikram et. al., 2001). The physical condition of the manuscript kept by Abdul Mulku Zahari's family is unknown. The microfilm manuscript is stored at the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia and the digital documentation is available on the Endangered Archives Program of the British Library. The manuscript of "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin" is the only manuscript. There are two unrelated texts in the manuscript of "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin". One of the texts is a letter from the Dutch addressed to Sultan Azimuddin.

The text of "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin" is on pages 1 to 13. On the first page, there was a signature, but there was no clear name from the owner of the signature. On the last page, it was explained that the letter was written and signed at Fort Rotterdam, Makassar, on February 25, 1791 at the time of Isha.

The language used in "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin" had common characteristic to classical Malay, such as the appearance of the sound [h] which is symbolized by the letter *h* at the end or middle of a number of words. In addition, there were also writing characteristics that were commonly found in manuscripts from the eastern archipelago because the writing of the letters got the influence from local narratives, namely the appearance of the sound [ŋ] behind the sound [k] in the words "semangkin" and "Mangkasyar".

In "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin" there were several issues. The main issue was the March 22, 1766 Contract between Buton and the Dutch. In the letter, it was said that the representative of Buton requested the abolition of article 8 of the contract. It was also reported that Buton violated Article 8 and Article 14 of the March 22, 1766 Contract. The updated 1766 contract was signed on January 19, 1791. In "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin" was also stated how Buton sent an envoy in 1766 to make the March 22, 1766 Contract and how Buton did not pay off the compensation for robbery of ship *Rust en Werk* in the form of 1,000 slaves.

The problem which was also discussed in "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin" was that there had been no payment for the cannons that Buton had received before. Buton was also asked to return the cannons and the pots which were taken from the sinking Dutch ship. Another problem that was discussed was the interference given by the local residents to the employees who were tasked to check the logging of the cloves and nutmeg.

In addition, the letter also discussed the issue of Buton traders who went to prohibited areas, traders without licenses, and traders who traded/sold prohibited goods. In the letter, it was also reported that King Kamilanta, the envoy of Buton, requested Dutch assistance for his personal matters. In the closing part, the Dutch congratulated Buton on its victory against Kalingsusu.

B. The Dutch intervention in the sovereignty of the Buton Sultanate in "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin"

The relationship between Buton and the Dutch began with the signing of the agreement by Captain Apollonius Scotte who represented General Governor Pieter Both with Sultan La Elangi on January 5, 1613 (Suryadi, 2007:287). The agreement was referred to as Kontarati or Janji Bana which means 'the first agreement'. Buton built a relationship with the Dutch because Buton needed help from the Dutch to deal with threats from Gowa and Ternate.

Buton's need for Dutch protection was also reflected in the motive on the making of the fifth agreement in 1667 by Cornelis Speelman who served as Dutch admiral in the East with La Simbata, the 10th sultan with the title Sultan Malik Sirullah. Buton had just been attacked by Gowa for helping Arung Palakka. The Dutch fleet led by Speelman succeeded in warding off Gowa from Buton. The agreement was made on January 31, 1667 in the Thertolen ship and was only formulated into articles and signed on June 25, 1667 on the Thoff van Zeeland ship (Ligtvoet, 1878:53; Zahari, 1978:16). Speelman also ordered Lieutenant Jan van Haarlem to maintain security in Buton in anticipation if Gowa would take revenge (Zuhdi, 2010:176).

In addition to protection from threats outside the sultanate, Buton's relationship with the Dutch also became the ratification of Buton's sovereignty over its territories. Yunus (1995) divided Buton into three administrative regions, namely wolio or the sultanate, kadie or the areas outside the palace, and barata which were small kingdoms with self-government but abide under Buton (Suryadi 2007, 288). The ongoing relations between the Dutch and Buton showed the Dutch's recognition that Buton was the ruling party over a number of its vassals. In the closing of the letter, the Dutch congratulated Buton on its victory against the rebellion of Kalingsusu as its vassal (SKKSA, p. 13). The congratulatory showed that the Dutch was on Buton's side.

Buton considered the agreements made with the Dutch as equivalent to traditional customs. This was recorded in a kabanti, a traditional poem with Wolio language entitled "Kanturuna Mohelena". In the kabanti, it was said that

“Teguhkan perjanjian yang awal
Kontraknya masing-masing zaman
Camkan betul adat dan perilaku
Segala keputusan di zamannya Murhum” (Zuhdi 2010, 329)

The poem verse meant that the sultanate must hold on to the existing agreements and contracts and customs and traditions. Every time a new sultan was appointed, they must renew the 1667 Agreement as a form of affirmation of the agreement (Zuhdi, 2014:143). However, since 1667, no sultan had renewed the agreement, as stated in the excerpts of "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin" below.

Syahdan lagi utusan kamu itu yang bernama Raja Kamilanta telah sudah mengatakan kepada kami sehingga Amir al Speelman pada tahun seribu enam ratus enam puluh tujuh tahun 1667 : sampai kepada tahun seribu tujuh ratus enam puluh enam tahun 1766 : telah sudah beberapa banyak raja di Buton belum ada yang *membaharui* perjanjian. / Sebab itulah maka Tuan Gurnadur tiada boleh habis pikirnya apa sebabnya. Maka demikian itu dan lagi apa gerangan sebabnya / raja Buton dan segala wazir menteri-menterinya maka tiada sekali-sekali tersebut di dalam suratnya perihal ihwal itu .. (SKKSA, p. 4)

Sultan Azimuddin was named La Masalumu and was the second sultan from a noble family of Tapi-tapi (Zahari 1977 II, 148). He served from 1788 to 1791 as the 25th sultan (Ligtvoet 1887, 86). Another note says that he served from 1794 to 1798 (Zuhdi, Ohorella, and Said 1996, 151). All three notes wrote the sultanate title of La Masalumu as Alimuddin, but in the SKKSA he was called by the name Sri Sultan Azimuddin. He succeeded Sultan Kaimuddin who resigned in April 1788 (Zahari 1977 II, 145).

When Sultan Azimuddin served as sultan, the most recent agreement was the Contract of March 22, 1766 which was signed by several people, including Sinkelaar from the Dutch and King Batauga from Buton. There were three differences between the March 22, 1766 Contract and the 1667 Agreement, which were as follows.

1. The 1667 agreement was signed "after it was read in front of the King of Ternate and his advisors" (Zahari 1978, 16). In article 7, it was also said that Buton had to report to Ternate and the Dutch if the sultan of Buton passed away. On the contrary, there was no interference from Ternate in the creation of the 1766 Contract.
2. In the 1766 contract, there was article 9 which contained threats to Buton if Buton betrayed the Dutch.
3. The creation of a new article in the 1766 Contract whose contents were Buton must assist and provide supplies for the Dutch ships that docked at Buton. The article became article 12 (Ligtvoet 1878, 84—85).

Sultan Azimuddin sent an envoy to renew the contract and requested for article 8 of the 1766 Contract to be removed. Buton considered the article 8 to be "too insulting to Buton" (SKKSA, p. 5). The following is the eighth article.

Perkara yang kedelapan

Segala menteri-menteri dan segala besar-besarnya akan tiada sekali-sekali akan boleh mengeluarkan atau menaruh ganti yang lain jikalau tiada memberi tahu dahulu kepada Kumpeni sebagaimana raja-raja dan segala menteri-menteri akan tiada boleh mengeluarkan suatu jugugu atau seorang-orang besar-besarnya atau menaruh yang menggantikan dia jikalau tiada dengan suatu ada persalah-salahannya, maka ia pergi mengadukan hal sebab kepada Kumpeni dahulu supaya Kumpeni itu akan memeriksa dia serta memutuskan // (8) bicaranya. Dan jikalau ada sudah gantinya, maka Hujung Pandang di dalam kota Ruterdam atau dalam negeri Betawi dan jangan sekali-sekali ada dalam hari raja akan memberi dengan sepatutnya. (Zuhdi 2010, 321—322)

In that article, it appeared that the Dutch wanted to be involved in the election process of the sultan by asking Buton to report [to them] before dethroning and appointing a sultan. It was not in accordance with the *Istiadat Tanah Negeri Butun*, which stated that outsiders cannot become the Wolio medium or government officials (Ikram, 2000:25), while those who could choose and test the prospective sultans were *bonto ogena* and *siolimbona* who were part of Wolio medium. *Bonto ogena* and *siolimbona* could receive suggestions for names of candidates who were considered appropriate, however, the final decision regarding the prospective sultan who will be appointed as sultan was in the hands of the bonto (Rudyansjah, 2008:116). The name of the elected sultan was even kept secret by the bonto until the official announcement in front of all the people (Rudyansjah, 2008:120).

At the beginning of the sultan's selection process, the bonto with sapati and kenipulu would choose a good day to take the sultan's great equipment from the former sultan. These officials and the two Kapitalao would again gather to determine the good day to nominate the candidates after all the Wolio medium took the sultan's great equipment. On the day of the nomination and screening of the candidates, only bonto ogena and siolimbona were present. In the announcement of the prospective sultan, the chief bonto from siolimbona, bonto Balawu and bonto Peropa would whisper the two Kapitalao who would then shout the name of the prospective sultan. The prospective sultan would be picked up from his residence and would be bathed in a ceremony before being inaugurated and sworn in (Rudyansjah, 2008:113—128).

La Masalumu was appointed sultan with the title Sultan Azimuddin without being reported to the Dutch. The Sultanate of Buton said that they could not immediately come to Makassar because there were obstacles, but when "the time came" Buton still did not come to Makassar and Batavia to inform about the obstacles they were getting (SKKSA, p. 7). The Dutch then felt that Buton had acted arbitrarily. The Dutch's complaints regarding violations of article 8 of the 1766 contract made by Buton were as follows.

Syahdan lagi dari tahun seribu tujuh ratus enam puluh enam tahun 1766 : tiada lain yang dijadikan raja melainkan ini sebab itulah raja tua mengeluarkan dirinya. Itulah kami katakan tiada berbetulan dengan perkataan kontrak itu. Dan lagi ia mengambil raja *baharu* maka tiada ia mematutkan dirinya datang kemari *membaharui* kontrak itu sebagaimana *patut*, karena meski ia dipanggil kemari melakukan pekerjaan itu, tiada ia melakukan itulah. Maka kami mengatakan kepada utusan itu, sayogianya kamu pikirkan. Adapun sekalinya pekerjaan yang tiada berpatutan itu niscaya tiada menjadi baik kemudiannya kelak. Pekerjaan yang demikian itu men[c](j)adi cedera pesahabatan kita ini. Kesudahannya kelak menjadi susah adanya. / (SKKSA, hlm. 5)

In the excerpt above, it could be seen that Sultan Azimuddin did not go to Makassar to report and renew the contract. After being called, he still did not come to Makassar. Sultan Azimuddin only sent a group of envoys consisting of King Kamilanta, two ministers, four *pangalasan* (assistant ministers), and two interpreters in November 1790 (SKKSA, p. 1). The Dutch expressed their disappointment in the absence of Sultan Azimuddin on page 6 of the SKKSA.

Itulah maka kami katakan kepadanya coba tiada kamu menggantikan kekuasaan raja kamu datang di sini akan membaharui itu kontrak yang kepada tahun seribu tujuh ratus enam puluh enam tahun 1766 : ~, niscaya kami katakan kepada kamu baik kamu segera meminta dahulu perintah yang lain kepada raja kamu daripada pekerjaan ini, karena jikalau kamu tiada mau melakukan hal itu nyatalah kelihatan yang orang Buton hendak merembuk kontrak perjanjian tanah Buton dengan Belanda. Dan lagi tiada sekali-sekali ia ingat serta mengenang daripada kebajikan yang telah sudah diterima Tuan Jenderal dan se[k](g)ala raad van Indië di Buton, sebab ia mengambil raja tiada berpakatan dengan perkataan kontrak maka diturut juga permintaannya adanya.

The Dutch disapproved the removal of article 8 of the renewed contract. They thought that the Governor-General in Batavia would also disapprove of the request of the Buton Sultanate (SKKSA, p. 5). If article 8 was to be removed, the role of the Dutch in the internal politics of the Buton Sultanate would reduce. In the end, the article was not removed, but changed, as stated on page 8 of the SKKSA.

Maka kepada tujuh 7 hari bulan Desember maka Tuan Gurnadur bertemu lagi, berkata-kata kembali hari inilah hari yang selamat dan hari yang beruntung. Maka Kompeni yang kuasa di Bawangina akan *membaharui* kembali surat kontrak perjanjian dengan tanah Buton, persobatannya yang tua. Maka adapun kontrak itu nantilah di belakang, maka ia dipersumpahkan utusan kamu itu .. Itulah maka kita memberi selamat kedua pihak, daripada sebab kami dapatlah berpatutan perkataan kedua / pihak. Maka kita menyudahkan perihal *mesyurat* kita demikian[t](n)lah adanya. Syahdan lagi kami harap daripada pekerjaan kita yang *membaharui* kontrak ini diselamatkan kiranya serta ditetapkan persobatan Kompeni dengan tanah Buton selama-lamanya.

The excerpt above showed negotiation between the representatives of the Buton Sultanate led by King Kamilanta and the Dutch produced an agreement that accommodated the wishes of both parties. Although in the end the Dutch influence was not completely lost in the process of choosing the sultanate officials, it could be seen that Buton was persistent to defend its sovereignty by asking for the abolition of the article and continued to insist when the Dutch refused the request.

It is unknown how the context of article 8 has been updated because there was no text edition of the new contract they signed on January 19, 1791. However, in the text, the Dutch explained that Buton did not need to immediately report to the Dutch if a new sultan was appointed. The Dutch would not consider Buton violating the agreement. Buton could inform the Dutch when the season was good for sailing (SKKSA, p. 8). The Dutch also explained the contents of article 7 which also discussed the appointment of a new sultan. The following was the Dutch's explanation in the SKKSA on page 8.

Hanya satu juga, dia minta kalau-kalau Tuan Gurnadur boleh menerangi sedikit perkataan di dalam perkara tujuh itu yang ada tersebut dalamnya mengatakan jikalau ada raja Buton meninggalkan dunia, yang kepala bicara di Buton hendaklah ia segera-segera menyuruh memberi tahu kepada Belanda itu kepada Tuan Gurnadur di Mangkasyar, sebab karena utusan kamu itu mengatakan tiada boleh sekali-sekali kami melakukan itu. Jikalau ada raja meninggalkan dunia itu lain-lain perkara daripada hal raja, maka kebetulan ingin tiada baik menjadi kesudahannya tiada baik kepada tanah Buton. Sebab itulah, maka wazir menteri-menteri di Buton jikalau tiada menghendaki rusak tanah Buton itulah, maka ia mengambil suatu orang yang dipercahayanya akan dijadikan kepala memerintah tanah. Kemudian jikalau ada waktu yang baik maka baharu ia menyuruh memberi tahu kepada Belanda. Itulah maka kami menjawab kepada utusan kamu akan hal itu pada perkara yang ketujuh.

The amendment to article 8 which stated that Buton did not have to immediately report the change of sultan and sultanate officials gives Buton the freedom not to be interfered with by the Dutch. However, on the next page it was explained that Dutch employees would come to Buton together with Buton's envoy who had returned from Makassar to examine the newly appointed sultan. The Dutch then intimidated Buton with article 9 which contained threats of attack. It showed that the Dutch's influence in Buton's politics has not completely disappeared. The Dutch only changes its form. The following is an excerpt from the SKKSA whose contents were the Dutch's threats.

Syahdan maka jikalau musim itu adalah baik, kamu datang di sini memberi tahu hal ihwal itu. Maka ada lagi *kometer* kamu datang bersama-sama akan *membaharui* (9) kontrak perjanjian itu dan boleh lagi Belanda jikalau ia mau menyuruh *kometer* pergi di Buton memeriksa bersama-sama dengan segala wazir menteri-menteri di Buton daripada orang yang diambil dijadikan raja itu dari hal bangsanya dan yang sepatutnya serta mufakatnya segala rakyat akan mengambil ia raja. Maka jikalau Belanda memeriksa maka diketahu[d]ilah pekerjaan itu tiada dengan sepatutnya. Niscaya Belanda kelak melakukan sebagaimana yang tersebut di dalam perkara sembilan itu, karena jikalau lulus juga orang Buton itu melakukan sekehendak hatinya dan pendapat / akhlaknya, niscaya menjadi bisalah kelak orang Buton melakukan pekerjaan yang demikian itu. (SKKSA, hlm. 8—9)

In the excerpt above, the Dutch threatened Buton by reminding Buton of article 9. Article 9 of the 1667 Agreement only stated that the Dutch would impose a punishment on the sultan of Buton. In article 9 of the March 22, 1766 Contract, which was an update of the 1667 Agreement, the Dutch explicitly said that "surely this will be the destruction of the land of Buton, which the Company will do as it pleases from the land of Buton" ["niscaya itulah halnya kebinasaan tanah negeri Buton nanti akan Kumpeni berbuat barang sekehendaknya hatinya dari tanah Buton itu adanya"] (Zuhdi 2010, 322).

Previously, the Dutch had indeed carried out attacks on Buton because Buton breaking its promises. One of the Dutch ships, *Rust en Werk*, was raided by a former Dutch employee in Buton territorial waters in June 1752. According to the 1667 Agreement, Buton had to provide assistance and supplies for Dutch ships in its territorial waters, but at the time of the piracy happened, Sultan Himayatuddin, the sultan in charge at that time, refused to help *Rust en Werk*. After meeting the Dutch, Sultan Himayatuddin still did not help the Dutch and instead asked for protection from Bone and Ternate. Because of this incident, Sultan Himayatuddin was overthrown from his position, but the relationship between Buton and the Dutch had already deteriorated (Zuhdi 2010, 213).

The Dutch also requested 1,000 slaves for the compensation on *Rust en Werk* ship to Sultan Sakiyuddin, successor to Sultan Himayatuddin, but Buton gave slaves who were unable to work, such as children and the elderly. The Dutch finally attacked Buton on February 24, 1755 at 6 AM (Zahari 1977 II, 124-125). The attack caused a huge loss on Buton's side. A number of

important sultanate officials were killed and the sultan's families were kidnapped (Zahari 1977 II, 128). The attack was one of the factors to compose the March 22, 1766 Contract which was later renewed by the envoy of Sultan Azimuddin on January 19, 1791.

The Dutch also showed its dominance in its relationship with Buton in the SKKSA. Each subject matter in the SKKSA was written repeatedly in turn as an affirmation that Buton did something that was not supposed to be, such as breaking a contract or not paying a debt. This assertion showed that the Dutch wanted Buton to know that Buton had done many things that the Dutch dislike.

Several times it was also said in the SKKSA that the Dutch did not give punishment to maintain their friendship with Buton (SKKSA, p. 6) and so that "no blood should be spilled" (SKKSA, 4-5) even though Buton made a mistake. It could be seen as a threat so that in the future Buton would be more obedient to the Dutch. The Dutch also wrapped up the influence they had on Buton as a suggestion to do so that Buton's situation would continue to be good, as written on page 5 ("As long as the unnecessary work is gone, it will be good later.") And page 9 of the SKKSA quoted below.

Maka daripada sebab demikian itu tiadalah kelak sultan yang boleh tetap ikrar di atas tahta kerajaannya meski ia baik perintahnya, meski baik pahalanya, karena barang siapa kelak yang kuat ialah mengaru biru kerajaan itu sehingga ia menjadikan dirinya raja. Akan tetapi daripada sebab tanah Buton itu terlalu amat keras akan /perpegangannya dengan Belanda sebagaimana yang tersebut di dalam kontrak perdamaian itu. Sebab itulah kelak maka Belanda tiada mau diam melihat-lihati sobatnya dianiaya kepada orang yang dibawahnya jikalau tiada sebabnya. / Inilah kami katakan maksudnya perkataan yang tersebut di dalam kontrak itu pada perkara yang ketujuh dan yang kedelapan dan yang kesembilan.

The caring attitude shown by the Dutch to Buton indicated that the Dutch still wanted to be seen by Buton as an ally and not as the authorities, even though the reprimands delivered by the Dutch showed the opposite.

Sultan Azimuddin was dethroned in April 1791, two months after he received the SKKSA from the hands of his envoys. Zahari (1977 II, 152) stated that the removal of Sultan Azimuddin from the throne was closely related to "the atmosphere in the sultanate at that time". In the 1794 Contract, affirmation of the 1766 Contract carried out by Sultan Muhuyuddin Abdul Gafur as the successor of Sultan Azimuddin, it was said that Sultan Azimuddin "wanted to destroy and change the custom with ordinary customs in the land of Butun" (Zuhdi 2010, 329). The dethroning of Sultan Azimuddin from the Buton throne could also be influenced by the Dutch because the SKKSA showed that the Dutch did not like Sultan Azimuddin because Sultan Azimuddin disobey the Dutch orders.

III. CONCLUSION

"The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin" was one form of diplomacy between the Sultanate of Buton and the Dutch which had been running since 1613. Studies on letters from Buton for the Dutch had been carried out several times, but the study on the letters received by Buton from the Dutch had not ever done. Based on the contents of "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin", it can be known that the diplomatic relations between Buton and the Dutch became one of the legitimacy of Buton's sovereignty as the ruling government. On the other hand, the diplomacy carried out by Buton with the Dutch was the legitimacy of Buton's sovereignty in the three regions of its government: the sultanate, villages outside the palace, and small kingdoms abided under Buton. This was shown by the Dutch's congratulatory to Buton for its success in reducing attacks from one of his vassals, Kalingsusu.

On the other hand, Buton's sovereignty as a government was not too intact because of the Dutch's intervention. The Dutch intervened in the internal affairs of the sultanate, among others in the selection and appointment of the sultan. The Dutch also showed dislike for Sultan Azimuddin who was considered not fulfilling the Dutch call. Nevertheless, the Sultanate of Buton has strong sovereignty. Based on the contents of "The Dutch-East India Company's letter to Sultan Azimuddin", it was seen that Buton refused to obey the Company's order which was unfavourable to Buton. Due to the great potential of Buton, the Dutch still tried to maintain their relationship with Buton.

Studies of letters in the past need to be done, especially letters written by Sultan Azimuddin and other sultans to get a different perspective on the correspondence between Buton and the Dutch. Through these studies, we can see various aspects that escape the historical record.

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