

BETWEEN NEUTRALITY AND INITIATIVE: AN ANALYSIS OF INDONESIA'S FOREIGN POLICY IN THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

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Abstract

Resolution of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict and Analyzing Its Impact on Indonesia's National Interests. The theoretical framework used includes Joseph Nye's concept of Soft Power, which consists of three main elements: culture, political values, and foreign policy, as well as the Realism theory in international relations. The research methodology adopts a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Data collection was carried out through literature review, observation, and in-depth interviews with key informants, namely the Head of Indonesia's Foreign Policy Strategy Agency and the Director of Europe II at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The research results show that Indonesia has taken several strategic steps in responding to the conflict, including acting as a mediator, pursuing diplomacy, urging a ceasefire, providing humanitarian aid, facilitating the evacuation of Indonesian citizens, and advocating for national security system reforms. The study also reveals that the Russia-Ukraine conflict significantly impacts Indonesia's national interests, including rising commodity prices, disruptions in global supply chains, economic uncertainty, export value fluctuations, and concerns over escalation toward World War III. These conditions drive Indonesia to be more active in international dialogue and diplomacy to prevent conflict escalation and achieve global peace.

Keywords: Indonesia's foreign policy, Russia-Ukraine conflict, Soft power, Realism, National interests.

A. INTRODUCTION

The Russia-Ukraine conflict, which began in 2014 and escalated with Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, has become one of the largest geopolitical crises of the 21st century. Rooted in the long history of post-Soviet relations between the two countries, the conflict was exacerbated by Ukraine's desire to join NATO and the European Union, which Russia perceives as a threat to its national security (Syuryansyah, 2022). The escalation of this conflict has had significant impacts on the global order, including Indonesia. As a developing country with a non-aligned and active foreign policy, Indonesia faces challenges in navigating its position amid these tensions (Intania, 2022). The economic impacts felt by Indonesia include the depreciation of the rupiah, a decline in the stock market, rising commodity and energy prices, and disruptions in global supply chains (Simanjuntak, 2022). In response to this situation, Indonesia has taken several diplomatic measures, including abstaining in the UN vote regarding Russia's invasion and engaging in mediation efforts through shuttle diplomacy. Indonesia's position as the G20 Presidency in 2022 also provided

a strategic opportunity to play a larger role in global peace efforts. This research aims to analyze Indonesia's foreign policy in addressing the Russia-Ukraine conflict during the 2022-2023 period. Using the concepts of foreign policy and diplomacy, this study will explore Indonesia's strategies in balancing its national interests including citizen protection, economic security, and food security stability while serving as a potential mediator in international conflicts (Tiara & Mas'udi, 2023; Komala et al., 2022).

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Foreign policy as a cluster of orientations. Foreign policy as a cluster of orientations serves as a guideline for decision-makers in facing external conditions that require decision-making and actions based on these orientations. These orientations consist of attitudes, perceptions, and values derived from historical experiences and strategic circumstances that determine a country's position in international politics. According to Sumpena Prawirasaputra, foreign policy is a collection of a country's policies aimed at regulating its international relations. It is part of national policy and is solely intended to serve the predetermined objectives, especially the goals relevant to the specific period being faced commonly referred to as national interests. Essentially, it represents a pattern of attitudes or responses to its ecological environment. These responses are shaped by interactions involving perceptions, experiences, and resources (Asep Setiawan, 2017). Foreign policy as a cluster of orientations serves as a guideline for decision-makers in facing external conditions that require decision-making and actions based on these orientations. These orientations consist of attitudes, perceptions, and values derived from historical experiences and strategic circumstances that determine a country's position in international politics. According to Sumpena Prawirasaputra, foreign policy is a collection of a country's policies aimed at regulating its international relations. It is part of national policy and is solely intended to serve the predetermined objectives, especially the goals relevant to the specific period being faced—commonly referred to as national interests. Essentially, it represents a pattern of attitudes or responses to its ecological environment. These responses are shaped by interactions involving perceptions, experiences, and resources (Asep Setiawan, 2017).

C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical method. The research design focuses on an elaborative and explanatory narrative analysis.

Data Collection

According to the journal by Alhadharah & Rijali (2019), data collection consists of three main parts as follows:

1. Literature Review: A comprehensive review of literature including books, academic journals, and related articles.
2. Observation: Observations of secondary information sources such as mass media and online sources.
3. Interviews: In-depth interviews with key informants relevant to the research topic.

Data Processing

In the article by Darmalaksana & Wahyudin (2020), four stages of data processing are outlined as follows:

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1. Editing: Reviewing the completeness and clarity of the data.
2. Classifying: Classifying data based on relevance and categories.
3. Verifying: Validating data to ensure its accuracy.
4. Concluding: Drawing conclusions from the processed data.

Data Analysis

The data analysis uses a narrative approach, combining interpretations of primary data (interview results) and secondary data (literature review) to produce a comprehensive description and in-depth explanation of the phenomenon being studied. This method was chosen to provide a holistic understanding of Indonesia's foreign policy in the context of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, taking into account various perspectives and information sources (Darmalaksana & Wahyudin, 2020).

D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The analysis of Indonesia's foreign policy in resolving the Russia-Ukraine conflict reveals a multifaceted approach that reflects the principles of free and active foreign policy and soft power diplomacy. The main findings of this research can be grouped into three key dimensions:

1. Soft Power Diplomacy Approach

Indonesia showcases its expertise in using soft power to influence conflict dynamics without direct involvement. This strategy includes:

- a. Promoting dialogue and negotiation as the primary means of conflict resolution.
- b. Offering itself as a neutral mediator, leveraging Indonesia's reputation as a non-aligned country.
- c. Utilizing international forums, such as the G20 and ASEAN, to strengthen its diplomatic position.

This approach allows Indonesia to maintain good relations with both parties while contributing to global peace efforts.

2. Balancing National and Global Interests

Indonesia's policy reflects a careful balance between:

- a. Protecting national interests, including mitigating economic impacts and ensuring energy security.
- b. Contributing to global stability and international peace efforts.

This is evident from:

- a. Providing humanitarian aid to Ukraine while maintaining economic relations with Russia.
- b. Implementing adaptive economic policies to address global supply chain disruptions and commodity price fluctuations.

3. Challenges and Opportunities

The conflict presents significant challenges for Indonesia but also opens up opportunities to enhance its role on the global stage.:

Challenges:

- a. Maintaining neutrality amid international pressure.

- b. Managing economic impacts, including inflation and market uncertainty.
- c. Anticipating potential conflict escalation and its implications for regional security.

Opportunity:

- a. Strengthening Indonesia's position as a trusted international mediator.
- b. Leveraging the situation to advocate for global security system reforms.
- c. Enhancing Indonesia's role in multilateral diplomacy.

4. Implikasi dan Langkah ke Depan

Indonesia's foreign policy in this conflict reflects an evolution in the country's role on the international stage. The approach taken not only adheres to the traditional principle of a free and active foreign policy but also demonstrates Indonesia's adaptability to contemporary geopolitical dynamics.

Looking ahead, Indonesia needs to:

1. Continue developing its soft power diplomacy capacity.
2. Strengthen national economic resilience against external shocks.
3. Enhance regional and international collaboration to address global issues.

With the right approach, the Russia-Ukraine conflict can serve as a catalyst for Indonesia to solidify its position as a key player in global diplomacy and international security architecture.

E. CONCLUSION

This research reveals Indonesia's strategic role in contemporary geopolitical dynamics, especially in the context of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The main findings point to two crucial aspects, namely active diplomacy in the midst of a global crisis. Indonesia positions itself as a 'bridge for peace' in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, showing a significant evolution in its foreign policy: 1) Neutral Mediator: Offering itself as a dialogue facilitator, utilizing its reputation as a non-aligned country. 2) Multilateral Advocacy: Active in international forums, voicing the importance of peaceful resolution. 3) Regional Solidarity: Strengthening ASEAN's voice in calling for a ceasefire. 4) Humanitarian Assistance: Demonstrates concrete commitment to global humanitarian values. This approach reflects Indonesia's transformation from a mere observer to an active actor in international diplomacy, emphasizing the principle of free and active foreign policy in the new era. Next, it focuses on aspects of navigating economic and geopolitical impacts. This conflict is a test of Indonesia's economic and diplomatic resilience: 1) Economic Challenges: Facing commodity price fluctuations and global supply chain disruptions. 2) Economic Diplomacy : Balancing relations with Russia (exports \$170 million) and Ukraine (exports \$5 million) amidst tensions. 3) Policy Adaptation: Demonstrate flexibility in responding to global economic changes. 4) Anticipate Escalation: Play an active role in preventing potential wider conflicts, including speculation about World War III. Indonesia's role in this crisis marked a turning point in its diplomatic posture, demonstrating its capacity to influence global dynamics while protecting national interests.

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