



## Enhancing Bilateral Cooperation: Indonesia-Russia Defense Relations

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### Abstract

This research aims to elaborate further on Indonesia and Russia bilateral cooperation by utilizing defense relations in the Southeast Asia region. Indonesia's defense cooperation with Russia is a strategy of sustaining foreign and defense policy instruments abroad to achieve interests and protect national sovereignty. This study uses a descriptive analysis of qualitative approach, and done through literature-based relating to the problems that arise. Additionally, journals, related documents, and web sources are also used as supporting data. It employs neorealism approach in understanding bilateral defense relations. Thus, by strengthening Indonesian defense diplomacy, how Indonesia national interests is able to pursue closer defense cooperation with Russia, and how this collaboration contributes to Indonesian defense diplomacy regionally in encountering external threat. However, through the ASEAN Defense Ministerial Meeting and the ASEAN Regional Forum, Indonesia's defense diplomacy utilized strategy which aim to generating mutual confidence, and reducing potential threats that can arise from the external threat. Indonesia, so far, has utilized its defense diplomacy by intensifying defense cooperation with Russia to foster a sense of mutual trust and enhancement effort in national defense capabilities to anticipate any potential external security threats. Indonesia's effort to enhance its regional power reputation for implementing foreign and defense policy at the international level, particularly at upgrading its national defense system. This research revealed that by strengthening economic cooperation and defense diplomacy, Indonesia would secure its defense cooperation with Russia and vice versa. As the most populous Muslim nation, Indonesia, 3<sup>rd</sup> world largest democracies and significant regional power, intentionally has a strategic interest in maintaining peace and stability.

**Keywords:** Indonesia, Russia, national interest, defense policy, defense relations

### 1. Introduction

Indonesia needs emergency awareness of the quality procurement of national defense. An awareness that can make all national security stakeholders aware and alert to the possibility of external attacks, that at any time the country's sovereignty can be threatened due to military and non-military threats from other countries (Acharya, 2001:5). Faced with this condition, the government must understand the condition of national security in Indonesia and build it so that it is able to overcome the various threats that come through every threat to unilateral territorial claims. In addition to internal conditions, the scope of external noteworthy considering the threat of transnational national territory, past the limits of sovereignty, and has been seen as a threat shared by the countries in the world. ASEAN is the only regional organization of Southeast Asia, has become one of the containers to Indonesia to fight for its national interests in order to support national security in the defense sector (Acharya, 2012:16). In so doing, it needs to build a clear understanding of how major theoretical debates link up with each other particularly in understanding the defense relations, and how the structure of the discipline of international relations is established (Jackson and Sørensen, 2016: 7). It is expected that the defense cooperation between countries will have a real impact on the development of the national defense industry particularly in increasing and strengthening bilateral relations (Budilaksono, 2020). Responding to the dynamics of geopolitical conditions in the Asia Pacific region, the direction of Indonesia's foreign policy in 2021 is considered to be in line with recent challenges (Kompas, 2021). Nevertheless, Indonesia still needs to focus its diplomatic resources, especially strengthening defense diplomacy, so that strategic defense cooperation with Russia can be pursued optimally and sustainably.

Cotter and Forster (2010:16) stated that defense diplomacy rise has not come about through their traditional role as a means of strengthening allies' defense capabilities, but rather as an instrument for attempting to build cooperative relations with former or potential adversaries, and thereby helping to prevent potential conflicts. This process called strategic engagement. Further, at the major power level, the US and its allies have used defense diplomacy as a component of wider policies designed to improve relations with Russia and China. Australia has used it as a means of engaging Indonesia. While, Manurung stated (2021: 78), for Indonesia, the optimal role of the government in realizing the stability and security of a strategic environment is also an integral part of Indonesia's national interests, so that Indonesia has specific interest to monitor developments in situations that threaten world peace and regional stability in order to make concrete and constructive decisions. The defense diplomacy utilization as a means of improving relations and preventing conflict with potential enemies, explores the lessons that may be learned from the West's military engagement with Russia and China since the 1990s and concludes by assessing the wider relevance of defense diplomacy as a tool of conflict prevention (Cotter and Forster, 2004: 3).

Defense diplomacy is as an instrument for building cooperation and preventing conflict between former or potential adversaries, and in a number of different ways and operates on a number of different levels (Cotter and Forster, 2010:16-17): 1) Military cooperation can perform a primarily political role, acting as a symbol of willingness to pursue broader cooperation, mutual trust and commitment to work to overcome or manage differences; 2) Military cooperation can be a means of introducing transparency into defense relations, in particular with regard to states' intentions and capabilities; 3) Defense diplomacy can be a means of building or reinforcing perceptions of common interests; 4) Military cooperation is also about changing the mind-sets of partner states' militaries; 5) Military cooperation may be used to support specific, concrete defense reforms in the partner state; 6) Defense assistance may also be used as an incentive to encourage partner states to cooperate in other areas. However, the use of military cooperation as a tool for building confidence and improving broader political relations with potential adversaries raises a number of problems and dilemmas. Behind the use of military cooperation as a means of strategic engagement lie major questions about the causes of international conflict and the connection between military power and political relations between states.

Thereafter, to build a quality national defense system amid long, medium and short term needs, it is also necessary to pay attention to the geopolitical constellation of the region and the limitations of state budget allocations. However, purchasing a major weaponry defense system is not an easy thing, but a complex decision sequence. Indonesia wants to build a defense system with a deterrence effect on other countries in the Asia Pacific region. The military weaponry must be continuously renewed and its combat capacity must not be inferior to that of other countries. Indonesia needs to have a clear and consistent defense strategy by building its own national defense industry so that it is not easily predictable by other countries. To meet the needs of this major weaponry defense system, Indonesia will still purchase modern and up-to-date military weaponry (Kompas, 2020). The condition of the Covid-19 pandemic that has hit the world since early 2020 has become a momentum for collective awareness. This collective awareness is in the form of the need for mutual collaboration or cooperation between civilizations in the world. Since the inauguration of President Joko Widodo in his second term of leadership from 2019 to 2024, at least Indonesia has held defense diplomacy with Turkey, Russia, France, Austria, the United States, Japan and South Korea.

Indonesia's defense diplomacy conducted with regard to the dynamics of the geopolitical and geostrategic position in the international world by prioritizing the same close relations with all countries in the world. This is done also through the achievement of bilateral communication, both through direct official visits to friendly countries and virtual communication. Apart from that, the defense diplomacy carried out by Indonesia is also an effort to ensure that the defense industry cooperation with various producing countries can run well, and is beneficial to the national interest.

The geographical area of Indonesia which is filled with abundant natural wealth must make the Indonesian government always pay attention to efforts to sustainably maintain its territorial sovereignty. This requires an adequate and available defense budget allocation in the face of any external security threats. Indonesia's weak military strength and unpreparedness are likely to weaken Jakarta's bargaining position in carrying out bilateral diplomacy, especially when it comes to violations of territory and state sovereignty. After the cold war, Indonesia's national security situation itself was greatly influenced by the dynamics of geopolitical and geostrategic conditions in the region. At least, there are two main reasons, namely related to the sharpening of the potential for conflict in the South China Sea and the escalation of China's rivalry with the United States in

the Asia Pacific region. During this time, Indonesia's defense policy in a neutral position in conducting defense diplomacy with various countries. The certainty that Indonesia's position remains neutral refers to the principles of free and active politics. In late 2020, Indonesian Defense Minister Prabowo is committed to ensuring Indonesia's position in implementing a free and active foreign policy and not being involved in any defense pacts or military cooperation (Kompas.com, 2020). Furthermore, Setyawan, et.al stated the development of information technology in the international world also has an impact on the use of cyber space which includes all aspects of national life (2016:3). Advances in technology, particularly in the cyber sector, have made boundaries between countries increasingly blurred. This triggers the emergence of crimes and non-military threats in the technology sector for a country in the form of cyber threats. Henceforth, to deal with this, Indonesia needs a strategy to protect its national security.

In an anarchic world, Russia and the United States have little choice but to compete with the other, lest one fall behind and become vulnerable to the other's predations (Walt, 2018:10). From Europe to Iran to North Korea, the world does not make sense anymore unless you put all your illusions aside. Realism has a long history and many variants, but its core rests on a straightforward set of ideas. As the name implies, realism tries to explain world politics as they really are, rather than describe how they ought to be. For realists, power is the centerpiece of political life: Although other factors sometimes play a role, the key to understanding politics lies in focusing on who has power and what they are doing with it. In international relations, realism remains a handy guide to many things that have happened in the recent past or that are happening today. Manurung (2018: 60) stated that, Russia recognized that Indonesia continues to play a more prominent role with its global maritime fulcrum in Southeast Asia and the broader Asia-Pacific region, its deepening ties and intensive engagement with Russia may prove to be noteworthy in the bilateral, regional and global context.

Defense diplomacy is a series of diplomacy activities carried out through state cooperation activities both multilaterally and bilaterally, carried out by the military officers and related stakeholders during peacetime by involving military cooperation on strategic issues. It ranges from military to non-military roles, such as peacekeeping forces, peace enforcement, promotion of good governance, disaster response, protecting human rights, etc. (FKP Maritim, 2014:5). This is done to achieve the national interest of the country concerned, especially in terms of defense and security in order to avoid the occurrence of a war or open conflict with other countries. Further, defense diplomacy is also carried out by using armed force and related infrastructure as a means of security policy and foreign policy of a sovereign state. It is also carried out by using armed force and related infrastructure as a means of security policy and foreign policy of a sovereign state. Defense diplomacy is implemented by policy-makers, among others, to find a balance between the need to create regional security stability, increase defense capability, and the defense independence of a country. Indeed, the success of the implementation of national defense diplomacy is highly dependent on diplomatic efforts at the global, regional and bilateral levels (TNI, 2006:3). Furthermore, implementation of the procurement contract for the supply of 11 Russian Su-35 aircraft to Indonesia could begin in 2020 (Indonesia Ministry of Defense, 2020) .

One of the challenges for Indonesia in implementing the development of a strong and resilient national defense system and defense policy is the low level of awareness of relevant stakeholders in Indonesia of the potential threats to national security in the outer and frontier territories.

The world entered the era of change no later than the second half of the 2000s. It is complicated to have a common understanding of the conditions that surrounded the disintegration of the former world order and the processes, horizons, and results of the transition to new global order (Manurung: 2019:21). As explained earlier, the development of a robust Indonesian defense system aims to defend the country's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the safety of the entire nation from threats and disturbances to the integrity of the nation and state. Indonesia's defense budget for 2021 is set at US\$ 9.2 billion (IDR136.99 trillion). Indonesian 2021 expenditure is a 16.2% boost over the original 2020 defense budget of IDR117.9 trillion (Grevatt, 2020:1). Indonesia increase the capability of national defense through (Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic Indonesia, 2021), i.e.: 1) implementation of the state defense system for land, sea and air forces by developing reserve and supporting components; 2) development and implementation of the defense concept for large islands; 3) implementation of accountable, transparent, and free-corruption measures in defense budget management; 4) development of national defense forces which has the capability of strategic deterrence and high mobility to be deployed within and outside the jurisdiction in the context of upholding sovereignty and protecting national interests; 5) revitalization of the defense industry as a producer of advanced, strong, independent, and competitive defense and security equipment to meet the needs of national defense; 6) increase international cooperation in the field of defense and involvement in world peacekeeping missions under the United Nations and other international

institutions in order to participate in maintaining world order and peace; 7) non-military defense capability implemented by government ministries, government institutions and regional governments by optimizing the utilization of national resources for the benefit of national defense.

Henceforth, in defending the country's sovereignty from threats and disturbances, Indonesia implements a universal defense system based on universality, integration, preparedness, and sustainability which can be explained as follows (Indonesia Ministry of Defense, 2020): 1) safeguarding Indonesia sovereignty and territorial integrity and protecting the safety of the entire nation from all forms of threats; 2) the development of an integrated and modern public defense and security system; 3) the realization of national resource management, for national defense; 4) the implementation of the defense area management. It regulates based on Indonesia Laws Number 3/2002 (Indonesia Ministry of Defense, 2002), this means the involvement of all national resources that the government prepares early. Well organized in a total, integrated, directed, and sustainable manner to uphold state sovereignty, maintain territorial integrity, and the entire nation's safety from all forms of threats. State defense for a sovereign nation is a means of safeguarding, protecting, and defending the integrity, unity, and integrity of the nation as well as national sovereignty against all forms of threats. The Indonesian nation has its own way to build its national defense system, namely a universal defense system involving all citizens, territories and other national resources (Pratama, 2020: 6), which is prepared early by the government and implemented in a total, integrated, directed and sustainable manner to enforce state sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the safety of the entire nation from all threats.

The bilateral trade, economic cooperation, and investment can be promoted and improved by the two countries, including preparing and developing digital infrastructure facilitation, eliminating non-tariff barriers and localization of production, and sustainable processing. In building business relations with Russian business actors, it is necessary to strengthen the local government's role and all relevant stakeholders to play a significantly important role in enhancing economic relations between the two countries. Besides, there are also bright prospects in various sectors of information and communication technology (ICT) between Indonesia and Russia (Indonesia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2021). The opening of match-making efforts can bridge Russia's information and communication technology sector with Indonesia. This sector also supports areas such as providing education, developing data security, and banking between the two countries. Both governments expected that there would be a continuous productive dialogue between the businessmen of the two countries.

Russia is an untapped market that needs to be explored for the Indonesian economy's sake (Indonesia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2021). In early 2021, through its embassy in Moscow, the Indonesian government continued making breakthroughs and opening up the Russian market for Indonesian businesspeople. At the global level, the Russian government's steps to encourage Covid-19 vaccination to contain the pandemic will have a positive impact on Russia's national economic stability. The results are expected to begin to show in the fourth quarter of 2021. In the future, both countries expected that the prospective areas of cooperation between Russia and Indonesia will be in the fields of energy, pharmaceuticals, infrastructure, agricultural food (agri-food), aviation, information and communication technology, and the digital economy and media.

While, bilateral relations between Indonesia and Russia have been closely established and have reached the level of strategic partnership relations, particularly the enhancement of defense cooperation and 70 years of diplomatic relations (Indonesia Defense Ministry, 2020). This bilateral relation has all the prerequisites for reaching a strategic level, as stated by Russian defense minister Sergei Shoigu on January 28 2020 in Moscow with Indonesian minister of defense Prabowo Subianto (Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, 2020). During the meeting, two defense ministers agreed to enhance further relations and cooperation in the defense and military-technical cooperation (Indonesia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2020).

The rise of conflicts and crimes that threaten Indonesian sovereignty generate clouding Indonesia's defense security system availability. The weakening of Indonesia's military strength after the military embargo by the US, France, and Germany from 1999-2005 made it urgently carrying out defense cooperation with other countries in providing defense equipment and the quality of the Indonesian military means of state defense. One example of an embargo is the US's implementation against Indonesia from 1999 to 2005 in the procurement of military weapons due to human rights violations committed by Indonesian armed forces in East Timor. Washington's military embargo on Indonesia is a thing of the past. In the future, the US will continue to be committed to supporting the modernization of the largest archipelago nation in the world's weaponry defense system (TNI, 2006) sustainably. Military cooperation is one of the pillars or forms of implementation of the partnership involve Indonesia and the United States.

Russia is increasingly advanced in technology and military, always seeks the attention and support of developing countries in realizing its superpower. After the New Order, the two countries gradually began to improve relations that had faded. It began with a meeting between President Megawati Soekarnoputri and President Vladimir Putin in Moscow on April 21, 2003. Bilateral relations between the two countries are getting stronger with the spirit of friendship, equality, mutual respect, and mutual understanding.

Whoever the leader of Russia is, it's time to open the Kremlin's eyes to view the role of a Jakarta free and active in the Asia Pacific region. Indonesia continues to strengthen its strategic partnership with Russia while still upholding a free and active foreign policy. The two countries should respect each other.

Russia, China, and the US perceive Indonesia's strategic position in Southeast Asia as strategic partners, but of course not in a political-military sense as with their allied countries. Those three countries always have the ambition to expand their sphere of influence continuously. The three superpowers are very interested and have strategic interests in making Indonesia a trusted partner. However, Indonesia does not wish to have a strategic political-military alliance with the major global powers and is quite satisfied with maintaining the status quo in its capacity as a non-aligned country. Consequently, it is challenging to predict Indonesia's important position in the Kremlin's strategic foreign policy priorities. Obviously, Russia will never let Indonesia get caught up in the global political game between the US and China. However, Indonesian free and active foreign policy provides flexibility for Jakarta to maneuver in international politics. This article attempts to view Indonesia and Russia defense diplomacy from perspectives in international relations, i.e.: realism, neo-realism and defense diplomacy. Nye in 2004, in his book *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, developed the concept of soft power as an alternative in achieving foreign policy success. Furthermore, he argues that the most effective strategy requires a combination of hard and soft power. The application of only one of the two elements in a particular situation is always proven to be insufficient. The concept of intelligent power means the effective use of hard power combined with soft power elements. Dr. Chester A. Crocker, a foreign policy observer from the US, explained that innovative power is a strategy that involves diplomacy, persuasion, capacity building, and the application of projected armed power to gain political and social legitimacy. Hu Jintao, the former President of the Republic of China who spoke at the 17<sup>th</sup> congress of the Chinese Communist Party in November 2012, also emphasized the importance of boosting innovative power.

The defense diplomacy strategy of a country is a collaboration of the diplomacy, defense, and sustainable military-industrial development components. However, partially, the various defense diplomacy activities of a country have 3 (three) characteristics, i.e.: 1) confidence-building measures goals; 2) defense capabilities development, and 3) sustaining national defense industry improvement.

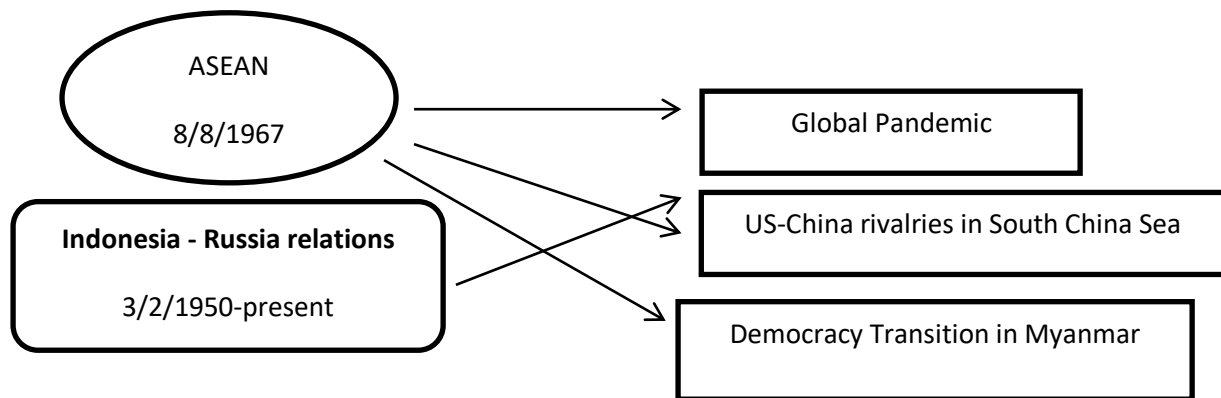
The closeness of the two countries has existed since Russia was still part of the Soviet Union since 1950. According to the Indonesian Ministry of Trade, the data recorded a positive trend in Indonesia's bilateral trade with Russia from 2015 to 2019 period. However, the Covid-19 pandemic had a significant effect on the decline in trade and investment between the two countries, particularly in 2020 (Indonesia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2021). The signing of a strategic partnership marked this closeness of the two countries. This will be an essential milestone in both countries' bilateral relations, particularly in responding to US and China rivalries and international efforts to overcome the global pandemic outbreak. China's rise and the decline in American hegemony, especially in the Southeast Asian region, is always interesting to elaborate constructively. US leader implements divergent national interest facing China ambition to dominantly control international politics. The rise of China under President Xi Jinping leadership is perceived as becoming a superpower. The US and Russia have signaled a major shift in the new balance of power in international relations. For many years, the US's unipolar system, especially in Southeast Asia, is clearly threatened by China's intentional presence in this region through its unilateral claim in South China Sea region.

Since 2017 to 2018, the world has been living through a period of progressive erosion, or collapse, of international orders have inherited from the Cold-War. Through the election of President Donald Trump in 2016 and the rapid increase of U.S aggressive containment policy of Russia and China, which is both a consequence of the gradual erosion which represents deep internal and international contradictions as this process, entered its critical point (Manurung, 2019:26). Most Southeast Asian countries, which are generally still weak in power, are in at least three options. First, allying with China so as not to become an enemy, by implementing a bandwagon policy; Second, strengthening the country's defense system by forming a joint bond with the US and balancing China's power in the region by implementing a balancing policy; Third, the country does not take sides in the

alliance between the US and China, and has utilized ASEAN presence as a solid regional organization for fifty years in maintaining Southeast Asia regional stability and security.

Further, the US pivot to Asia policy, which was initiated and intensified by the administration of the President of the US, Barack Obama (2008-2012; 2012-2016) gave a signal that Asia is an essential region for America and there are strategic national interests that need to be defended. Most likely, this competition will end with war or open military conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> century if the two world's major powers leaders cannot resolve it. Hence, following US President Joe Biden's inauguration with Kamala Harris on January 20th, 2021, there are currently changes in the security environment and regional strategies related to the formation of a balance of world power and the formulation of a new security order. The problem is with ASEAN countries. Whatever choice the ASEAN leader will make, it will undoubtedly affect the organization's sustainability internally and externally. The regional development that has occurred is that ASEAN countries form cooperation, including defense and security, and choose peaceful methods by implementing defense diplomacy. In the cold war era, the country's military would only cooperate with its allied countries' armed forces; however, since 911 to present that state relations carrying out through joint cooperation have begun.

Figure 1 Indonesia and Russia in Southeast Asia  
Source: modified by author



Most states no longer understand that national security is only limited to external threats that originate from other countries and directly take the form of military attacks. The arising phenomenon that is increasingly developing in security issues is no longer limited to state security and involves individual security or human security. Thus, in terms of non-traditional security understanding, issues that are developing in today's security start from the global pandemic, food security, energy security, the environment/global warming, economic resilience, climate change, bioterrorism, etc.

These external threats anticipated from the state are no longer only coming from other countries but most likely originate from non-state actors and are transboundary in nature. Defense diplomacy can be defined as the overall activity of state cooperation both multilaterally and bilaterally. It is done by military personnel and related stakeholders during peacetime through military institutions cooperation engagement on strategic regional issues, starting from strengthening role of the military to non-military role: peacekeeping force, peace enforcement, good governance, disaster response, human rights protection, etc (Forum Kajian Pertahanan Maritim, 2014).

In December 2017 in Jakarta, Defense Minister Ryamizard Ryacudu received an honorary visit from the Russian Ambassador to Indonesia Mikhail Y Galuzin regarding strengthening the two countries in the Asia Pacific (Indonesia Ministry of Defense, 2017). During the meeting, Ambassador Galuzin conveyed to the Indonesian Minister of Defense regarding the cooperation in the two countries' defense industry, especially the Sukhoi military aircraft, which are Russian production. Additionally, it also discussed the continuation of state loans, procurement, maintenance facility centers, and simulators.

The defense relationship between both major powers has provided many benefits, especially in the procurement of the defense system's main instrument (Alutsista) for Indonesia's national army. Defense cooperation needs to be expanded not only in defense logistics but also in comprehensive defense activities. Further, in the Southeast Asia region, Indonesia's defense relationship with Russia is a critical component of bilateral relations. Therefore, the Indonesian minister of defense expects to continue the good relations and essential cooperation gradually that has been established between the two countries.

For Indonesia, Russia is one of the world's major powers that has always supported and helped Indonesia under challenging times. As for Russia, Indonesia is one of the essential partners in the Asia-Pacific region, interactions traditionally built on reliable friendship and mutual trust. Friendship and mutual trust are considered prerequisites for bringing bilateral ties closer to the strategic partnership level involving two countries. Both countries are ready to continue to coordinate joint actions for the progressive development of Russian-Indonesian relations, including in the field of military and military-technical cooperation and in a multilateral format through the ASEAN Defense Ministerial Meeting-Plus dialogue partners.

Jakarta and Moscow continue to coordinate cooperation in the progressive development of Russia's defense relations with Indonesia, including in the fields of military and technical-military cooperation and in a multilateral format through dialogue partners SMOA-Plus.

Smart Power can be said to be an approach that emphasizes the need for a strong-armed force supported by efforts to foster international relations, partnerships and cooperation at all levels. In Indonesia itself, the concept of smart power has been implemented in national strategies, particularly those related to international relationships. At G-20 Summit in 2016, President Joko Widodo emphasized that the best way to deal with international terrorism is to prioritize an intelligent approach, which balances soft power and hard power approaches (Indonesia Military, 2018). The Indonesian armed forces themselves have put forward various defense equipment development programs and projections in carrying out various assignments, including involvement in a combined force in various world peace missions and military operations other than war. In military operations carried out by Indonesian armed forces, such as in the release of piracy in Somalia, overcoming armed separatist gangs in Poso, Central Sulawesi, and releasing prisoners in Papua, the soft power and hard power approaches are always carried out in a balanced manner. This is an implementation of intelligent power, which is a combination of hard power to develop armed power and soft power in the form of diplomacy.

## **2. Methods**

Indonesian and Russian bilateral relations and particularly defense cooperation has been established since Indonesia's independence on August 17, 1945. The relationship between the two countries has fluctuated along with the change in the leadership regime of the Indonesian government since President Soekarno (1945-1966) to President Joko Widodo (2014-2019; 2019-present). This research utilizes descriptive analysis of qualitative research. Defense cooperation between Indonesia and Russia has been established since Indonesia's independence. Through this research, the author wants to see the dynamics of bilateral cooperation between Indonesia and Russia through defense relations. In explaining these dynamics, the author uses the Neorealism approach, which believes that an anarchic international system makes the state cooperate with other countries and autonomously seeks to maintain the balance of power in the region. The concept of national interest is also used by the author to see on how Indonesia's interests work in choosing and prioritize Russia as the preference for the country's defense equipment supplier, as well as seeing Indonesia's efforts in carrying out its defense diplomacy.

For Indonesia, Russia is one of the global major powers in the world that has always supported and helped Indonesia in difficult times. The closeness of the two countries has existed since Russia was still part of the Soviet Union (1945-1990). The closeness of the two countries is also marked by the signing of a strategic partnership in April 2003, which will be an important milestone in bilateral relations. While, for Russia, Indonesia is one of the most important partners in the Asia-Pacific region, interactions traditionally built on friendship and mutual trust collaboratively.

## **3. Results**

### *3.1 Indonesia Defense Policy in Southeast Asia*

Defense diplomacy is peacetime military cooperation and assistance which has traditionally been used for realpolitik purposes of strengthening allies against common enemies (Cottey and Forster, 2010:5). Since the early 1990s, however, the Western democracies have increasingly used defense diplomacy for a range of new purposes. These include strategic engagement with former or potential enemies, in particular Russia and China, encouraging multilateral regional cooperation, supporting the democratization of civil and military relations and assisting states in developing peacekeeping capabilities. In Asia, the US has developed new military cooperation relationships with China and India, while a security dialogue has been initiated within the Association of South East Nations (ASEAN). The concept of defense diplomacy encapsulates this shift (Cottey and Forster, 2010:6).

The role of armed forces has traditionally been defined by the functional imperative of the use or threat of force, whether for purposes of defense, deterrence, compliance or intervention. Further, in contrast, involves the peacetime cooperative use of armed forces and related infrastructure primarily defense ministries as a tool of foreign and security policy.

The specific conditions of each country have a major influence on defense policies related to budget procurement allocations. History has shown that the increase in defense in the defense sector will increase when the potential for war or military conflict is in sight. On the other hand, spending on the defense sector will automatically decline in peacetime. This policy will be accompanied by an increase in the allocation of spending in the public investment sector and strengthening the social welfare of the community. For the 2021 budget ceiling, the Indonesian government allocated IDR 134,254 trillion for the defense ministry, an increase of 14.2 percent compared to the 2020 budget allocation (Kompas, 2021:6). The defense ministry's 2021 budget will be the largest in a decade.

President Soekarno pioneered the relationship when he met the Prime Minister of the Soviet Union (Russia at that time), Nikita Krushchev, in 1956. A closer relationship was established, well built, and maintained by both countries so that it is known as the Golden Age of diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Russia. Some evidence of the closeness between Indonesia and Russia at that time is also reflected in various signs of the friendship closeness between the two, such as the Friendship Hospital in Jakarta, Gelora Bung Karno which is similar to the Luzhniki stadium in Moscow, Youth Statue in Senayan, Tugu Monas, Tugu Tani, and Jatiluhur dam.

Russian supporting assistance also has provided to Indonesia by regarding defense equipment during the liberation of West Irian, from the end of 1950 to 1966, was made possible because of the two countries' closeness. During the New Order era, relations between Indonesia and Russia were fading due to strong anti-communist sentiments from 1967 to the end of the 1990s. However, in 1989 President Soeharto visited the Kremlin in Moscow to normalize relations between the two countries. At that time, the diplomatic relations between the two continued to exist, although the relationship was stagnant in terms of political, economic, socio-cultural, and military cooperation. Indonesia, under Soeharto's leadership was more inclined towards the US and its Western allies.

The Declaration of Friendship and Partnership Framework for relations between Indonesia and Russia was signed by the two leaders in April 2003. Then in 2013, to be precise, at the G20 Summit meeting in Saint Petersburg, Indonesia 5<sup>th</sup> President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono met with President Vladimir Putin, who emphasized that Russia is committed to continuing to strengthen relations and cooperation with Asia, including with Indonesia.

The sustainable economic cooperation is necessary to continue to encourage synergy and increase bilateral trade between Indonesia and Russia. The economic potential of the two countries is still great to be explored, and the initiative to hold a gathering of the context is becoming increasingly important to encourage the economic recovery of the two countries due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Indonesia and Russia are big countries, and based on World Bank data, the GDP of the two countries is above US\$ 1 trillion (Indonesia Embassy in Moscow, 2021). Therefore, there are still vast opportunities for mutually beneficial and complementary trade cooperation. According to the records of the Indonesian Ministry of Trade, currently, ten leading Indonesian export commodities have entered the Russian market with significant transaction values, namely: palm oil products (CPO), natural rubber, copra products, cocoa butter, and vegetable oils, footwear, stainless steel, textiles, toy products, animal oil, and electronic equipment.

Further, both countries' cooperation in the economic sector and defense and security must be enhanced in a sustainable strategic partnership. Indonesia's palm oil export to Russia is the largest palm oil export with a value reaching more than US\$ 480 million in 2015 (Kementerian Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, 2016), which has brought benefits to both countries, so it needs to be sustained. Several other Indonesian commodities have the potential and interest of the Russian market and its society, namely coffee, fishery products, tropical fruit, automotive parts, aluminum oxide, and various other machine tools. Meanwhile, according to data from the Russian Export and Import Association (EIA) in 2021, Indonesia still needs to supply cigarette and tobacco products to Russia (Indonesia Embassy in Moscow, 2021). So far, EIA Russia has successfully established business with PT. Djarum.



Additionally, EIA Russia has also imported several superior Indonesian products, including beauty and health products, food products, footwear, and clothing. The Mayora products from Indonesia have entered 50 major cities in Russia through Russia's largest supermarket chains, such as Auchan, Magnit, and Metro. Mayora products are in great demand by Russian consumers. Instant coffee is a superior product with high demand, followed by coffee candy, biscuits, cereal, and chocolate wafers. In 2018, Mayora exported 1,000 containers of instant coffee to Russia.

Indonesia and Russia's cooperation looks even closer, stronger, and collaborative, when Indonesian President Joko Widodo visits Sochi on 18 to May 20 2016 at the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ASEAN and Russia Summit (Indonesia Secretariat Cabinet, 2016). Several agreements have been reached, including five MoUs on defense, archives, culture, and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing that have been signed, as well as an investment commitment of US\$ 20 billion, as well as a commitment to improving bilateral relations. Indonesia and Russia are members of the G20, so that both countries are interested in contributing to the recovery of the global economy. There was a decrease total value of bilateral trade, US\$ 2.64 billion in 2014 to US\$ 1.98 billion in 2015, or a decrease of around 25%.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, in general, the bilateral trade rate between Indonesia and Russia has decreased by 4.12%, from US\$ 2.45 billion in 2019 to US\$ 2.35 billion in 2020 (Indonesia Embassy in Moscow, 2021). However, the export performance of Indonesia to Russia in 2020 is considered still quite well with a value of US\$ 1.72 billion, compared to 2019, which only reached US\$ 1.68 billion. Furthermore, in the economic sector, the trade relations between the two countries also continue to improve, although it must be improved. According to the trade balance processed by the Indonesian embassy in Moscow from the Russian Federal Customs Service, the average from 2011 to 2019 is approximately US\$ 2.7 billion. Hence, the socialization of Indonesian government policies related to superior export commodities to foreign countries is carried out through the Omnibus Law and a mass vaccination program to encourage the recovery of national economic activity in 2021. For three decades, the Russian government has provided higher education scholarships for Indonesians who wish to pursue undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral opportunities in the higher education sector. In several study programs such as information technology, medicine, international relations, etc., Russia also has advantages apart from being a country with an important role in the international system. This number is still far from being compared to other Asian countries. Malaysia sends 3,000 students, Vietnam 10,000 students, and China 20,000 students. What is even more ironic is that the three countries are willing to spend on the state budget to send the best students to Russia for higher education. The governments of these three countries understand and have a vision of the future regional and global constellations. However, there are still a low number of Indonesian students who continue their studies in Russia by taking advantage of Russian government scholarships up to the present day.

Every year, the Russian government allocates especially 160 scholarships to Indonesian youth to study in Russia. Likewise, the Indonesian government provides scholarships to Russian youths to continue further study in Indonesia under the Darmasiswa, Arts and Culture Scholarship (*Beasiswa Sosial Budaya Indonesia/BSBI*) and Developing Country Partnership schemes. Indonesian Local governments need to be encouraged to send more students to continue further study in Russia by having scholarships.

The US, China, Japan, South Korea, and Western countries recognize Russia as being very superior in the fields of science and technology, defense equipment, space, and nuclear. This is a vital asset to catch up with Indonesia from other countries. Russia makes a major contribution in maintaining security stability in global challenges. In the era of 1950-1960's, Indonesian 1<sup>st</sup> President, Soekarno sent around 20,000 Indonesian students to Russia. This strategic decision was based on Soekarno's understanding of Russia's important role in the international arena in the future.

There are still many opportunities for Indonesian products to enter the Russian market. The mainstay of Indonesia's exports to Russia includes palm oil, rubber, coconut, and shoes. Several leading sectors also can enter the Russian market, such as tea, cocoa, tropical fruits, and coffee. While, in the investment sector, there are several Russian investment projects in Indonesia, including in the energy sector, which is collaboration between Rosneft and Pertamina, the pharmaceutical and hospitality industries that still need to be improved. Until 2019, the value of Russian investment in Indonesia reached US\$18.4 million (Wahidah, 2021).

No less important is cooperation in the military and defense fields. In this field, the two countries routinely hold bilateral meetings at the minister of defense level and joint commission sessions which are held annually.

Besides, relations in the military defense sector are also marked by educational cooperation such as training for Sukhoi aircraft simulators, education for Indonesia military officers at Armed-Force and General Staff College level, visits between military officers to each country, navy-to-navy talks, as well as Navy warships visits.

In the field of military and defense equipment procurement, the Indonesia military operates various Russian-made military's defense equipment, such Sukhoi 27/30 fighter planes for Indonesian Air Force, MI 17, MI 35 helicopters for the Indonesian Army, and Tank Battalion BMP 3/BT 3F for Indonesian Navy.

Indonesia's defense diplomacy is carried out bilaterally or multilaterally. There are three types of bilateral military diplomacy cooperation for Indonesia: 1) defense diplomacy as confidence-building measures; 2) defense diplomacy to improve defense capabilities; and 3) defense diplomacy for developing the national defense industry. During peacetime, defense diplomacy prioritizes armed forces utilization and related infrastructure as the means of foreign and security policy. Confidence-building measures are usually carried out through state visits, dialogue and consultation, information exchange, strategic partnerships, officer/staff exchanges and joint training. Meanwhile, defense diplomacy to improve capability is carried out in the form of military assistance, weapons procurement, etc. Defense diplomacy in the context of developing the defense industry is carried out through technology transfer, research and development cooperation, investment in joint ventures, etc.

Henceforth, defense diplomacy between Indonesia and Russia will be largely determined by any various regional security dynamics. Indonesia should be active again in developing innovative ideas about regional security arrangements in Southeast Asia regions, which regulates major countries' involvement, including Russia. It is perceived as an integrative and comprehensive process involving all related stakeholders concerned with Indonesia's status as the world's largest archipelago as Indonesia has a maritime resources wealth in its exclusive economic zone. Besides, Indonesia's defense diplomacy must always consider and anticipate Russia's short-term pragmatic interests. Indonesia's sustainable defense diplomacy must ultimately be utilized to achieve these pragmatic interests in enhancing regional security stability and Indonesia's defense independence.

Additionally, China's economic power arise has provided a new signal for international politics, especially a revival in the military sector development, which sooner or later can become a real threat to any countries in the Southeast Asian region. In terms of defense and security, ASEAN countries regionally seem to balance China's power as a country with the potential as a threat by strengthening regional defense-security cooperation, as evidenced by the increasing bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the defense-security sector in this region.

Most ASEAN countries also do not isolate themselves from China's rise and establish trade-economic cooperation and open up opportunities in various fields with these countries by being on the winning side, namely the hope of obtaining economic benefits in the future by implementing bandwagon policy. Furthermore, in responding to the US and China rivalries in South China Sea currently, defense diplomacy should be an essential instrument in foreign and defense policy implementation. Up to present time, still there is no general definition of defense diplomacy. However, defense diplomacy is always related to: 1) cooperative activities carried out by the armed forces and the provision of infrastructure for the fulfillment of a country's military infrastructure during peacetime; 2) defense diplomacy involves military cooperation in a broader range of issues, from strengthening military roles to non-traditional roles, such as peacekeeping, peace enforcement, promoting good-governance, disaster response, protecting human rights, etc.; 3) In the past, military cooperation was only held with allied countries, however, nowadays military cooperation is much more developed and is also carried out between friendly countries, even among competing countries aimed at expanding its influence in global politics.

### *3.2 Russia-Indonesia Cooperation*

The world is currently facing uncertainty and is experiencing a changing strategic environment. Indonesia and Russia, which have had a very long relationship and experienced ups and downs, need to respond to this by increasing bilateral partnerships. Defense diplomacy can be defined as the use of armed forces and related infrastructure during peacetime as a primary supporting tool to pursue foreign policy and national defense (Manurung, 2020:3). The post-Indonesian proclamation, as the largest archipelagic country in the world with a commitment and concern for the implementation of international world order and lasting peace, Indonesia certainly avoids using any hard power in facing threats from other countries. Indonesia places diplomacy as the first line of defense. This is also parallel with Indonesia's defense doctrine, which is defensive, not offensive.

Russia is an untapped market that needs to be explored for the sake of the Indonesian economy. The Russian government, which encourages the COVID-19 vaccination to tackle the pandemic outbreak, will positively impact Russia's economic stability. Simultaneously, the results are expected to begin in the fourth quarter of 2021 (Indonesia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2021). Prospective areas of cooperation between Russia and Indonesia are in the fields of energy, pharmaceuticals, infrastructure, agriculture-food, aviation, information and communication technology, and the digital economy and media. Trade, economy, and investment can also be promoted, among others, by facilitating digital infrastructure, eliminating non-tariff barriers, and localizing production and processing. Data from the Indonesian Ministry of Trade recorded a positive trend of bilateral trade between Indonesia and Russia in the 2015 to 2019 period. However, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the decline in trade and investment between the two countries, especially in 2020.

Further, Russia and the US relations have been almost always unfavorable. The mass demonstration of the Russian opposition over Alexei Navalny's detention demonstrates the complexity of the relationship between the two. Navalny, who is an opposition figure against President Vladimir Putin, was arrested on his return to Russia and detained for 30 days. The US, European Union, France, and Canada asked Russia to free the opposition figure. Moscow indeed rejects it and calls the Navalny case a domestic problem. The Navalny case shows how complex Russia's relations with the West, particularly the US, are. The two remain hostile. The conflict is not only motivated by the strategic interests of the two countries in international politics. However, it includes the military dimension and the expansion of global influence, along with ideological issues.

Indonesia and Russia have several standard views on global issues, such as support for strengthening the United Nations system and multilateral free trade arrangements that rely on the World Trade Organization. Within the bilateral framework, the potential for increased cooperation is enormous, especially in the fields of trade, investment, tourism, and making Russia a place to study science and high technology.

Indonesia's relations with Russia have been very well established, even during the early days of Indonesia. Diplomatic support, arms supply assistance, and Russian military advisers in the 1960s were essential factors in the struggle to return West Irian or Papua to the bosom of the motherland. Bilateral relations had ebbed in from the late 1960s to 1980s on the backdrop of the Cold War. The restoration of bilateral relations that began with President Suharto's meeting with President Mikhail Gorbachev in 1989 has continued to this day. President Joko Widodo visited Russia and met President Vladimir Putin while attending the ASEAN-Russia Summit in Sochi in 2016 (Galih, 2016). Both leaders discussed about the bilateral trade relations, some efforts to overcome barriers to trade relations, several Russian investment plans that want to be pushed or advanced in Indonesia. Also, it is related to cooperation in the defense sector, it will include joint training of Indonesian-Russian armed forces personnel. There were also discussions on the Indonesian plan to purchase Russian defense equipment in the form of eight units Sukhoi Su-35 fighters.

The East Europe and Central Asia region, often also called Eurasia is a prospective market for leading Indonesian products (Manurung, 2020:2). It can be done by deepening trade and economic cooperation with traditional Indonesian markets and seeking to open new markets for Indonesian products in prospective countries. The Eurasian Economic Union is an international organization for regional economic integration. It has an international legal personality and is established by the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union. It provides for free movement of goods, services, capital, and labor, pursues coordinated, harmonized, and single policy in the sectors determined by the Treaty and international agreements within the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

ASEAN and Russia relations began in 1991 and were accepted as ASEAN full partners in 1996 (Indonesia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2021). ASEAN-Russia entered 25 years of partnership in 2021. So far, Russia has often been an essential partner in maintaining stability and security in the region. During 2018-2021, various achievements that have taken place in enhancing ASEAN and Russia relations include increasing Russia's partnership to become an ASEAN Strategic Partner in 2018, providing training for research in the field of science, cooperation in the field of information technology, encouraging the formation of a partnership fund that can assist in the development of cooperative projects. ASEAN security regulatory initiatives are carried out through various diplomatic mechanisms such as the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, the ASEAN Regional Forum; the Shangri-la Dialogue; ASEAN + 1; and ASEAN + 3. Currently, these forums have not yet led to formalization and or institutionalization of binding security cooperation in Southeast Asia. These forums still rely on the existence of diplomatic processes which are expected to enhance mutual trust building between countries (TNI, 2006).

At the end of January 2021, Russia and ASEAN agreed to increase cooperation in responding to challenges in the region due to the pandemic, maintaining regional stability and security, and strengthening economic recovery efforts. Entering 25 years of ASEAN partnership with Russia, Indonesia expects that ASEAN and Russia can play a more critical role in maintaining regional peace and contributing to the ASEAN community's welfare. Furthermore, in March 2021, the Covid-19 pandemic will be around the world for even a year. The discovery of the Covid-19 vaccine by several developed countries has become an essential effort in bringing the world out of the pandemic. However, this situation has contributed to various recent global dynamics. Besides, ASEAN and Russia are also encouraging joint efforts to restore the economy in the region. ASEAN and Russia agreed to promote boosted trade contacts between ASEAN and countries that are members of the Eurasian Economic Community (EEC) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), exchange experts to improve the region's digital economy, cooperate in promoting intelligent cities.

In the socio-cultural field, Russia also supports strengthening public health and emergency response to pandemics within various ASEAN frameworks. Russia is also offering the Sputnik V vaccine to meet vaccine needs in the Southeast Asia region. Also, a Disaster Management Memorandum of Understanding was also agreed between ASEAN and Russia to help enhance and improve cooperation in the field of ASEAN disaster management with Russia.

Moreover, the economic downturn and the weakening of world cooperation, which is increasingly slowing the international community's support for the availability and supply of vaccines for developing and underdeveloped countries, are global dynamics that need to be resolved. The economic recession has made all countries try their best to save themselves from the domestic economic crisis. Commitments and agreements in various global forums such as the G-20 regarding Covid-19 and the global economic recovery have not been realized. Consequently, bilateral and regional cooperation is more prominent, according to the national interests of each country or group of countries in a particular region. The escalation of increasing vaccine nationalism in developed countries has resulted in Russia, China, and India conducting Covid-19 vaccine diplomacy to various developing and underdeveloped countries.

Russia is one of the countries that is trying to develop a Covid-19 vaccine candidate quickly. Through the Gamaleya Research Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology, Russia developed the Sputnik V vaccine. Russia had even claimed Sputnik V as the world's first coronavirus vaccine in August 2020, before they started phase three clinical trials (Sekretariat Nasional ASEAN-Indonesia, 2021). Vaccine diplomacy is the exercise of subtle force to expand influence and optimize the political economy interests of developed countries and efforts to boost political, economic, investment, and defense cooperation with developing and underdeveloped countries today and in the future.

Russia itself focuses vaccine diplomacy on Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Iran (Media Indonesia, 2021), Israel, Syria, Venezuela, and countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Kompas, 2021). China exports vaccines to developing and underdeveloped countries where its' Belt and Road Initiative project is located or traversed, in the United Arab Emirates, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Turkey. Meanwhile, India targets neighboring countries in South Asia, such as Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Myanmar, and Nepal.

The Iranian government approves Russia's Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine (Kompas, 2021). This is a victorious decision for Moscow as it aims to increase its geopolitical influence. Iran, which is battling the Middle East region's deadliest outbreak, says it will depend only on Russia, India, and China's vaccines. Iran is also working to produce domestically made injections. As a Southeast Asian country, Malaysia has decided to buy the Sputnik V vaccine from Russia to fight the Covid-19 pandemic in its country (Sekretariat Nasional ASEAN-Indonesia, 2021). The Malaysian government has agreed to bring in 6.4 million doses of the Sputnik V vaccine. However, the entire interaction of global dynamics currently happening reflects the deepening imbalance of global development and economy between developed countries that produce vaccines and developing and underdeveloped countries that need vaccines.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Indonesia should strengthen its defense diplomacy strategy with Russia by optimizing confidence-building measures goals, defense capabilities development, and sustaining national defense industry improvement. Indonesia's defense diplomacy is carried out, among other things, to find a balance between the need to create regional security stability, increase defense capability, and Indonesia's defense independence. The success of the

implementation of Indonesia's defense diplomacy greatly depends on the diplomatic efforts achieved by Indonesia at the global, regional and bilateral levels.

It can be done especially for strengthening Indonesia's defense diplomacy with Russia, at the level of Russia's global strategy. Indonesia policy-makers has been placed defense diplomacy and defense cooperation on a high priority scale. This is mainly because the Russian government is eager for Indonesia's active involvement to be part of the global counterterrorism strategy and world peace.

In dynamic regional and global developments, Indonesia also partners well with Russia in understanding the various challenges that arise. Apart from always being a solid foothold in behaving and making decisions, Indonesia's national interest must be a priority. Thus, Indonesian government needs to make optimal efforts in making breakthroughs and opening up the Russian market for Indonesian business people and entrepreneurs. A positive trend in Indonesia's bilateral trade with Russia was recorded from 2015 to 2019 period. However, the Covid-19 pandemic had a significant effect on the decline in trade and investment between the two countries, especially in 2020.

For Indonesia, through strengthening defense diplomacy with Russia, the most important thing is how to boosting its power in Southeast Asia, by maximizing the deterrence effect regionally. Diplomacy is only one of the eight elements of national power that must synergize through increasing military power, the functioning of intelligence, diplomacy, law, information exchange, advances in information technology, finance, and the trade economy. For Indonesia, Russia is one of the essential partners in the Asia Pacific region. This critical position is from an economic point of view and the region's security and strategic geopolitical aspects.

At the regional level, defense diplomacy between Indonesia and Russia is marked by a tug of war between the wishes of ASEAN countries to initiate a security arrangement that is supported by the pillars of the Treaty Amity and Cooperation (TAC); Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN); Southeast Asia Nuclear Free Zone; and the ASEAN Security Community, along with Russia's realist ambition to secure its global interests in Southeast Asia.

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