

**NARRATING SOUTH-SOUTH  
COOPERATION: A COMPARATIVE  
STUDY OF INDONESIA'S FOREIGN  
POLICY IN AFRICA UNDER SBY (2004-  
2014) AND JOKOWI (2014-2024)**

**A Thesis**

**Submitted to the Master's Study Program of Political Science at the  
Faculty of Social Sciences in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of**

**Master of Arts (M.A.)**



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**UNIVERSITAS ISLAM INTERNASIONAL INDONESIA**

**DEPOK**

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## ABSTRACT

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Within the framework of Indonesia's cooperation with the African continent, the South-South Cooperation (SSC) narrative has been a consistent foreign policy instrument since the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference. However, Indonesia's relations with African countries have fluctuated over time. From the era of President Sukarno to President Joko Widodo, there have been changes in foreign policy orientation, especially during the Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) and Joko Widodo (Jokowi) administrations. Indonesia under SBY sought to revitalize the spirit of the Bandung Conference through multilateral approaches and the promotion of democracy in various international forums. In contrast, President Joko Widodo emphasized a bilateral approach that focused on economic diplomacy. This research aims to explain the changes in Indonesia's foreign policy behavior towards Africa in the South-South Cooperation narrative by comparing the two leaders. To answer this question, this study uses the theoretical frameworks of Actor-Specific Theory. This theory emphasizes the role of a leader's leadership style, orientation and **psycho-milieu** in shaping foreign policy behavior. This research argues that changes in Indonesia's foreign policy behavior in narrating SSC in Africa are influenced by actor-specific factors, particularly the leadership style, leadership orientation, and psycho-milieu of the head of state. Specifically, leaders with a normative leadership style, context-driven leadership orientation, and thinker-type psycho-milieu tend to produce foreign policy narratives based on values, norms, and global solidarity, as reflected in SBY's approach. In contrast, leaders with a pragmatic leadership style, goal-driven orientation, and doer-type psycho-milieu tend to produce pragmatic, result-oriented foreign policy narratives that emphasize concrete outcomes and domestic benefits, as observed under Jokowi's administration. This research uses a qualitative approach with narrative analysis techniques, document studies, and utilizes primary and secondary data such as state speeches, foreign policy documents, and official government publications. The main contribution of this research is to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics of Indonesia's foreign policy in the context of South-South Cooperation and highlight the importance of leadership style in determining the direction of Indonesia's engagement with African countries in the framework of South-South Cooperation.

*Keywords: South-South Cooperation (SSC), Indonesia Foreign Policy, Indonesia-Africa Relations, Leadership Style, Leadership Orientation, Psycho-Milieu, SBY, Jokowi.*

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AABS	: <i>Asian African Business Summit</i>
AAS	: <i>Asia-Africa Summit</i>
AEC	: <i>ASEAN Economic Community</i>
AIIB	: <i>Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank</i>
APSC	: <i>ASEAN Political-Security Community</i>
ASC	: <i>ASEAN Security Community</i>
ASEAN	: <i>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</i>
AU	: <i>African Union</i>
BDF	: <i>Bali Democracy Forum</i>
BNDCC	: <i>Bali Nusa Dua Convention Center</i>
BRI	: <i>Belt and Road Initiative</i>
COC	: <i>Code of Conduct</i>
CSSTC	: <i>Centre for South-South Technical Cooperation</i>
DOC	: <i>Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea</i>
FOCAC	: <i>Forum on China-Africa Cooperation</i>
FPA	: <i>Foreign Policy Analysis</i>
GMF	: <i>Global Maritime Fulcrum</i>
IAF	: <i>Indonesia-Africa Forum</i>
IAID	: <i>Indonesia-Africa Infrastructure Dialogue</i>
IAPF	: <i>Indonesia-Africa Parliamentary Forum</i>
ICWA	: <i>Indonesian Council on World Affairs</i>
IDB	: <i>Islamic Development Bank</i>
IMF	: <i>International Monetary Fund</i>
IORA	: <i>Indian Ocean Rim Association</i>
IR	: <i>International Relations</i>
IRDIA	: <i>Indonesia Railway Development Incorporated for Africa</i>
JOKOWI	: <i>Joko Widodo</i>
MDGs	: <i>Millenium Development Goals</i>
MOU	: <i>Memorandum of Understanding</i>
NAASP	: <i>New Asia Africa Strategic Partnership</i>
NAM	: <i>Non-Aligned Movement</i>
NCT SSTC	: <i>National Coordination Team on South-South and Triangular Cooperation</i>
NGOs	: <i>Non-Governmental Organizations</i>
NTBs	: <i>Non-Tariff Barriers</i>
OIC	: <i>Organisation of Islamic Cooperation</i>
PDI-P	: <i>Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan</i>
PM	: <i>Prime Minister</i>
PTA	: <i>Preferential Trade Agreement</i>
SBY	: <i>Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono</i>
SOEs	: <i>State Owned Enterprises</i>
SSC	: <i>South-South Cooperation</i>
TCDC	: <i>Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries</i>
TICAD	: <i>Tokyo International Conference on African Development</i>

UN : *United Nations*  
US : *The United States*  
WTO : *World Trade Organization*  
ZOPFAN : *Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality*

## **CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Research Problem**

Indonesia's foreign policy on the African continent has experienced many significant developments. Indonesia's behavior on the African continent cannot be separated from Indonesia's commitment to the 1955 Bandung Conference (Asia-Africa Conference) event, which emphasized the South-South Cooperation framework (Dorigné- Thomson, 2023). This historical narrative has always been taken into consideration in formulating Indonesia's foreign policy in Africa. The Bandung Conference is still very relevant both historically and in the contemporary context in reflecting Asian-African solidarity. Bandung solidarity against the practices of colonialism and imperialism became the root of South-South cooperation in Asia-Africa (Tan & Acharya, 2008). Nowadays, South-South cooperation has become a discourse, where some scholars argue that this cooperation framework can release dependence on Western countries, but some also argue that the success of the South has actually been integrated into the existing global capitalist development paradigm, thus not really changing the world order, but rather strengthening the existing structure (Gosovic, 2016; Gray & Gills, 2016).

Despite the debates, the SSC narrative remains an instrument of Indonesia's foreign policy in managing its relations with the African continent due to historical ties. Engel highlighted that the SSC narrative was very alive in the Sukarno era due to the Bandung Conference in 1955, and began to fade in the Suharto era until post-reformation (Engel, 2017). In the reform era, President Habibie to Megawati had focused their political agenda on smoothing the political transition process from an authoritarian regime to a democratic country. Until in 2004, for the first time direct elections were held and SBY was elected as the 6th president. In this era, Indonesia, under President SBY, began to revive the SSC narrative by hosting the 2005 Asia-Africa Summit (AAS) on 22-24 April 2005 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference, which later resulted in the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership (Asia-Africa Summit, 2005). This strategic partnership is intended to strengthen solidarity between the two continents as well as become a new platform for cooperation between the two regions. Then in 2014, when Jokowi became president, SSC became part of the nine priority agendas of national development which then gave

birth to many cooperation initiatives in the African region, especially through the Indonesia-Africa Forum (IAF) (Parameswaran, 2014; Tahalele, 2015).

This paper highlights the differences in Indonesia's narratives regarding the SSC in Africa during the SBY and Jokowi eras. In the SBY era, the SSC with Africa was positioned as an extension of the idealistic "Bandung Spirit," emphasizing Southern solidarity, technical cooperation, and Indonesia's moral role as a leader in developing countries. This approach was implemented through multilateral platforms such as the NAASP. However, this initiative was ineffective due to a lack of ideas, the absence of an Afro-Asian epistemic community, minimal support from the African Union, and Indonesia's limited capacity on Africa (Dorigné-Thomson, 2021).

At the 2005 Asia-Africa Conference, Indonesia and South African President Thabo Mbeki commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Asian-African Conference and emphasized their commitment to the SSC. In his speech, SBY highlighted solidarity, historical ties, and the shared struggle against colonialism, and called for a stronger economic and political partnership (NAASP, 2005). Until 2011, Indonesia hosted the NAM meeting in Jakarta, discussing issues of peace, social justice, and development. However, this effort faced internal challenges such as differences in ideas and fragmentation among NAM members (Ciorciari, 2018).

The Asia-Africa Strategic Partnership (NAASP), initiated by Indonesia and South Africa in 2005, aims to revitalize Asian-African solidarity and strengthen connectivity between the two regions in addressing global challenges. Although its implementation has not been optimal, this initiative still demonstrates Indonesia's commitment to strengthening South-South cooperation (Muhibat, 2014). The establishment of NAASP aligns with SBY's foreign policy doctrine of "a thousand friends, zero enemies," which emphasizes expanding diplomatic relations and avoiding hostility. From 2004–2014, SBY focused on consolidating democracy and enhancing Indonesia's status at the global level (Fionna et al., 2018). He also voiced the interests of developing countries, particularly Africa, in the G20 forum regarding access to global funding, sustainable development, financial architecture reform, and climate change (Wihardja & Negara, 2018).

Under SBY's leadership, Indonesia has been actively promoting democracy through the Bali Democracy Forum (BDF) since 2008. This forum

aims to foster inclusive democratic dialogue in the Asia-Pacific region and showcase Indonesia as a model of tolerant democracy. Initially, African participation was minimal, but thanks to SBY's consistency, the number of African participants increased from 3 in BDF III to 8 in BDF VIII (Karim, 2023). The BDF does not impose a particular democratic model, but rather encourages the exchange of best practices tailored to each country's context (Vermonte, 2014).

After joining the G20 in 2008, SBY strengthened the middle power narrative and positioned Indonesia as a bridge between developed and developing countries, including Africa. This was reflected in the inclusion of the South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) agenda in the 2010–2014 National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN). Within the SSC framework, Indonesia emphasized the principle of equal partnership through technical cooperation, training, and the sharing of development experiences (Muhibat, 2014). As a middle power leader, SBY viewed Africa as a strategic partner to strengthen Indonesia's moral legitimacy. The SSC during the SBY era served as a platform for promoting democratization, inclusive development, and a just world order.

In contrast, under the Jokowi era, the SSC with Africa is geared toward pragmatic, economic-based partnerships (economic diplomacy) focused on concrete results. Africa is seen as a potential non-traditional market for domestic interests. Jokowi displayed a more aggressive approach, such as the holding of the 2018 IAF, the launch of SOEs Go Global (2020), the formation of the Africa Infrastructure Task Force (2019), and the separation of the Diplomatic Economic Expert Staff from the Socio-Cultural function through Presidential Decree No. 56/2015 (Susilo et al., 2024).

Indonesian foreign policy under Jokowi underwent a strategic reorientation with increased engagement in non-traditional regions, particularly Africa. This change was driven by disappointment with ASEAN's perceived suboptimal role in accommodating Indonesia's strategic aspirations (Rosyidin & Pattipeilohy, 2020). The government responded by expanding the scope of diplomacy through an aggressive economic approach, including the "Go Global" SOE agenda, which involves the government, private sector, and MSMEs to explore investment opportunities in the African market (Anwar, 2020; Jones, 2020).

This step demonstrates the seriousness of Jokowi and Foreign Minister

Retno Marsudi in diversifying Indonesia's market. Retno called this approach an effort to "go beyond the spirit of Bandung," by shifting the focus from political solidarity to concrete economic partnerships (Marsudi, 2017). In the 2015 National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN), Africa was designated a strategic region to support national development and prosperity (Bappenas, 2015). The appointment of expert staff for economic diplomacy also emphasized Indonesia's new priorities in African countries (Presidential Decree, 2015).

Jokowi's leadership style, which emphasizes development and market expansion, aligns with a competitive middle power strategy (Dorigné-Thomson, 2023). From the perspective of international trade theory, this strategy is believed to improve national economic prosperity through expanding global markets, creating jobs, and strengthening domestic industries (Ricardo, 2005; Smith & Cannan, 2019). Therefore, Jokowi positions Africa as a strategic market within the SSC framework to support domestic economic interests. The differences in Indonesia's framing of Africa in the SSC reflect the shifting direction of foreign policy following the change in leadership. However, the principle of an independent and active foreign policy remains its primary foundation.

The literature on international relations and foreign policy generally explains changes in policy direction through a structural approach, which emphasizes systemic factors such as the global distribution of power and a state's position within the international system (Buzan & Wæver, 2003; Gilpin, 1981; Mearsheimer, 2001; Walt, 1987; Waltz, 1979). However, this approach has limitations in explaining changes in foreign policy behavior between administrations within a relatively similar international structure.

Valerie M. Hudson (2005) highlights that the structural approach tends to ignore real actors, namely, individuals. States are merely abstractions; it is humans who possess agency, those who create meaning, act creatively, and make decisions. Under similar structural and material conditions, states' foreign policies can differ, and this can only be explained through an actor-specific theory approach that emphasizes the values, perceptions, and leadership styles of decision-makers. This approach is relevant for explaining the changes in Indonesia's foreign policy direction in narrating the SSC in Africa between the SBY and Jokowi eras.

This study starts from the assumption that Indonesia-Africa relations within the SSC framework are a dynamic process that continually evolves

according to the preferences of national leaders. Changes in Indonesia's approach to narrating the SSC can be attributed to differences in leadership style, orientation, and psychological milieu of each president. This aligns with Hudson's (2005) argument, which emphasizes that foreign policy behavior is more accurately explained through an actor-specific theory approach, which highlights individual agency as the primary actor in international relations.

According to Hudson, the decisions, perceptions, and values of decision-makers are at the root of interactions between states. States are not single actors merely responding to pressures from the international system, but rather are the result of leaders' interpretations of the strategic environment (Hudson, 2005, pp. 2–3). Therefore, this approach offers a more in-depth explanation than the dominant structural approach in the international relations literature.

Using an actor-specific theory framework, this study compares the leadership styles of SBY and Jokowi in shaping the direction and narrative of Indonesia's SSC policy in Africa. During the SBY era, the SSC was positioned as an ideological project grounded in solidarity with the Global South and international values such as democracy and human rights. In contrast, under Jokowi, the SSC has become more pragmatic, with Africa seen as a potential market in Indonesia's economic expansion strategy (Dorigné-Thomson, 2023). This shift in narrative is not sufficiently explained by a structural approach due to the relative stability of the international structure. Therefore, a focus on actor variables is crucial to understanding these dynamics.

## **1.2 Research Question**

Based on this problem, this study poses the following research question: How do differences in leadership style, orientation, and psycho-milieu explain the shifts in Indonesia's foreign policy narrative on South-South Cooperation with Africa during the administrations of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2004–2014) and President Joko Widodo (2014–2024)?

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

This study aims to explain differences in Indonesia's foreign policy behavior towards African countries in the context of the South-South Cooperation narrative during the Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Joko Widodo administrations. In particular, it seeks to identify how leadership style, orientation,

and psycho-milieu influence Indonesia's diplomatic orientation and strategy in Africa.

#### **1.4 Research Contribution**

This study has two main contributions. First, a theoretical contribution: this study enriches actor-specific theory in foreign policy analysis by using leadership style or leader's agency as a variable explaining differences in Indonesia's behavior in narrating South-South Cooperation (SSC) in Africa. While previous studies have focused more on the goals and outcomes of Indonesian foreign policy in general, studies on individual leaders' factors in SSC are still limited. However, according to FPA experts, the character of a leader as an agent has a significant influence on the direction of foreign policy. By comparing the leadership styles of SBY and Jokowi, this study demonstrates that a leader's worldview, whether multilateral and normative like SBY's or bilateral and pragmatic like Jokowi's, has a significant impact on the narrative of international diplomacy, particularly SSC. This strengthens the understanding of the role of human agency in international relations theory.

Second, an empirical contribution: this study presents empirical data related to Indonesia's foreign policy toward Africa, particularly in the context of SSC. By comparing the approaches of two different administrations (SBY and Jokowi), this study provides new insights into how leaders' perceptions and domestic and regional dynamics shape the direction of developing countries' foreign policy. This analysis demonstrates a shift in policy from a normative and solidarity-based approach during the SBY era to a more pragmatic and economic-oriented approach during the Jokowi era. In the context of SSC in Africa, this study also highlights the varying implementation of policies, depending on individual leadership styles, and provides an empirical contribution to the study of cooperation between developing countries, which has so far been understudied in Indonesia-Africa relations.

#### **1.5 Thesis Structure**

Chapter I contains an introduction explaining the research problem, namely the differences in Indonesia's foreign policy behavior in narrating South-South Cooperation (SSC) in Africa between the SBY and Jokowi eras. This puzzle serves as the main research question, with the aim of explaining the

differences in Indonesia's foreign policy approach towards Africa within the SSC framework during the two administrations. This chapter also highlights the theoretical and empirical significance of the research.

Chapter II discusses the theoretical foundation and literature review. Previous literature tends to ignore the role of individuals in Indonesia's foreign policy decision-making regarding SSC in Africa. Therefore, this study uses actor-specific theory, emphasizing human agency as the primary independent variable.

Chapter III explains the research design, including methods, data collection, and analysis. Using primary and secondary data sources, this study explores the causal mechanisms between leadership style and the way SSC is narrated for the national interest.

Chapter IV discusses how SBY and Jokowi narrated SSC in the context of Indonesia-Africa relations. Using actor-specific theory, this chapter analyzes the shift in approach from SBY's normative and multilateral diplomacy, which positioned Indonesia as a moral leader, to Jokowi's pragmatic approach, which emphasizes economic cooperation and the expansion of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) into Africa. This chapter demonstrates that the SSC narrative is influenced not only by structural factors but also by the strategic vision, priorities, and preferences of each leader.

Chapter V summarizes the key findings from the analysis of Indonesian foreign policy within the SSC during the SBY and Jokowi eras, including the use of narratives, diplomatic approaches, and the role of leadership style. The chapter also offers strategic policy recommendations to strengthen Indonesia's position in cooperation with Africa, as well as suggestions for further research on the relationship between leadership and foreign policy formation in developing countries.

## **CHAPTER II THEORETICAL FOUNDATION**

### **2.1. Literature Review**

Studies on Indonesian foreign policy within the framework of South-South Cooperation (SSC) have developed since the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference, which laid the foundation for solidarity among Asian and African countries (Ahmed, 1955; Assie-Lumumba, 2015; Engel, 2017; Tahalele, 2015). SSC is understood as cooperation that upholds the principles of equality, solidarity, and mutual benefit among countries of the South (Appadorai, 1955; Dlamini, 2019; S. S. Tan & Acharya, 2008). In the Indonesian context, Engel (2017) states that the SSC narrative faded after the Soeharto era due to the focus on the economic crisis and democratic transition.

During the era of President SBY, Indonesia attempted to revitalize the SSC, one of which was the 2005 Asia-Africa Conference which gave birth to the New Asia Africa Strategic Partnership (NAASP), which emphasized a formal approach and multilateral partnerships (Cheru, 2011; Tarrósy, 2016). Shekhar (2018) noted that Indonesia's leadership in Asia-Africa during SBY's era was demonstrated through its role in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Bali Democracy Forum (BDF). SBY's diplomatic style tended to be multilateral, global, and high-profile, reflected in his participation in various international forums (Fionna et al., 2018; Fitriani, 2017; Muhibat, 2014; Shekhar, 2018; Weatherbee, 2016). In the forum, SBY presented Indonesia as the third largest democracy in the world and the largest Islamic democracy, and promoted the values of democracy, human rights, and peace through inclusive dialogue between developing countries (Natalegawa, 2018; Sukma, 2011a; Vermonte, 2014; Wirajuda, 2002).

Meanwhile, during President Joko Widodo's leadership, Indonesia's foreign policy has shown an increasing focus on the African region, especially within the framework of economic diplomacy. Several foreign policy analysts have noted that under Jokowi's leadership, Indonesia has prioritized a more pragmatic and results-oriented approach in establishing cooperation with African countries. This approach is reflected in various initiatives, one of which is the holding of the Indonesia-Africa Forum (IAF) (Dorigné-Thomson, 2023; Haryono, 2019; Madu, 2017; Weatherbee, 2016). According to Dorigné-Thomson (2023), the Jokowi administration tends to avoid complex and ideational

multilateral approaches, such as democracy promotion, which previously characterized Indonesian diplomacy. Instead, Jokowi prefers a practical bilateral approach that focuses on economic cooperation that produces concrete benefits for national development. This approach is realized, among other things, through Indonesia's active participation in Africa+1 forums that emphasize direct mutually beneficial cooperation.

To explain patterns in foreign policy behavior, foreign policy scholars suggest using the actor-specific theory approach to emphasize the importance of a leader's leadership style in formulating a foreign policy. The basic assumption is that a country's actions cannot be separated from who the leader is, who makes the decision, and what factors influence these leaders to act. These factors include the leader's psychology, institutional position, values, perceptions or beliefs. (Hermann, 1980; Hudson, 2005).

Several previous studies have shown that the actor-specific approach has advantages in explaining foreign policy behavior patterns that cannot be fully explained by the structural approach. The structural approach that emphasizes the pressures of the international system, the distribution of power, and the position of the state in the global system can indeed explain the general context of state behavior. However, this approach often fails to explain the dynamics of foreign policy that emerge in similar structural conditions, especially when there are significant differences between leaders in one country. Therefore, an approach that focuses on individual characteristics of leaders, such as perceptions, values, leadership styles, and psycho-milieu, becomes important in understanding the foreign policy decision-making process. The actor-specific approach has the advantage of explaining foreign policy behavior that structural approaches cannot fully explain. While structural approaches highlight international system pressures and the distribution of power, they often fail to understand variations in foreign policy across similar structural conditions, particularly those resulting from differences in leader characteristics.

Previous studies demonstrate this: McFaul (2020) highlights the personalistic role of Vladimir Putin in Russia's shift to a more confrontational policy; Cason & Power (2009) explain the differences in Brazil's foreign policy orientation between the Cardoso and Lula eras through their leadership styles; Kesgin (2020) shows that Israeli leaders' hawkish or dovish tendencies influence responses to the Palestinian issue; and Dyson (2006) finds that Tony Blair's

leadership style encouraged Britain to join the 2003 invasion of Iraq to maintain international credibility. These four studies emphasize the importance of individual characteristics in foreign policy analysis.

These findings suggest that the structure of the international system is not sufficient to comprehensively explain foreign policy behavior. The changes that emerge between leaders in relatively similar contexts emphasize the importance of the actor approach. By emphasizing human agency, especially the leader, this approach provides space to understand how leadership style, perception, and personal orientation influence the decision-making process and direction of foreign policy. Therefore, this study adopts an actor-specific approach to explain the changing narrative of Indonesia's SSC in Africa between the eras of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and President Joko Widodo.

Studies on Indonesia's narrative in South-South cooperation (SSC) in Africa are still limited and varied. Engel (2017) states that Indonesia's SSC is driven more by domestic and global strategic interests than solidarity, with cautious approaches such as technical training aimed at increasing legitimacy without disrupting the global order. Dorigné-Thomson (2023) sees a difference between the SBY era, which focused on multilateral frameworks such as NAASP, and the Jokowi era, which emphasized domestic economic interests such as resource downstreaming. Gray & Gills (2016) divide views of SSC into optimists, who see it as an effort to emancipate the global South, and pessimists, who see SSC as still within the framework of global capitalism. Tarrósy (2016) assesses that Indonesia has the potential to play a significant role in Africa, but its approach remains pragmatic and lacks coordination to produce significant structural change.

The existing literature explains that Indonesia's approach to Africa has evolved since the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference, which gave birth to South-South Cooperation (SSC). As a pioneer of the Bandung spirit, Indonesia continues to maintain the relevance of SSC, albeit with diverse approaches. Several studies indicate a shift from a normative approach to a more pragmatic one, but have not fully explained the role of individuals in this change. Most studies still focus on structural, institutional, or economic factors, neglecting the role of leaders in shaping the SSC narrative. However, according to Hudson (2005), the actor-specific approach emphasizes that foreign policy is determined by individuals who are able to interpret structures, formulate national interests, and shape

diplomatic narratives. To fill this gap, this study uses an actor-specific approach by comparing Indonesia's foreign policy toward Africa during the eras of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2004–2014) and President Joko Widodo (2014–2024), to identify the causal mechanisms behind the evolution of Indonesia's SSC narrative.

## **2.2. Theoretical Framework**

### **2.2.1. Actor-Specific Theory**

Specific actor theory has a focus on actors, with the premise that everything that happens between and across states is rooted in human decision-makers, be they individuals or groups. As suggested by Hudson,

“International relations (IR) as a field of study has a ground, as well. All that occurs between nations and across nations is grounded in human decision makers acting singly or in groups. In a sense, the ground of IR is thus the same ground of all the social science. Understanding how humans perceive and react to the world around them, and how humans shape and are shaped by the world around them, is central to the inquiry of social scientists, including those in IR”. (Hudson, 2005, p. 1).

The emphasis on actors allows Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) scholars to showcase human agency, where they have the ability to create change, creativity, accountability, and meaning. According to her, in the study of international relations, it is important to understand how humans perceive and react to the world around them, as well as how humans shape and are influenced by that world. Most contemporary theorists in international relations suggest that it is the state that drives decisions, assuming that states, individuals, or groups are simplified into unitary rational actors equivalent to states. This approach is known as actor general theory (Hudson, 2005).

From Hudson's explanation, it can be understood that individual factors play an important role as a decision maker. In the case of Indonesia's foreign policy in Africa, it cannot be separated from the factor of a president as head of state. His authority as head of state affects the direction of foreign policy. Foreign policy is a reflection of the reaction of how Presidents SBY and Jokowi interpret Indonesia's relationship with Africa. To understand the changes of Indonesia's foreign policy in narrating SSC in Africa cannot be understood as a structural causality relationship as contemporary theorists explain like realists or liberalists. According to Hudson, this approach does provide important explanations, but this

approach seems to ignore the “fundamentals” of international relations that are detrimental substantively, theoretically, and methodologically.

Then Hudson explains that:

“It is IR’s subfield of foreign policy analysis (FPA) that develops the actor-specific theory required to engage the ground of IR. With its assumption that human decision makers acting singly and in groups are the ground of all that happens in international relations and that such decision makers are not best approximated as unitary rational actors equivalent to the state, FPA is positioned to provide concrete theory that can reinvigorate the connection between IR actor-general theory and its social science foundation (Hudson, 2005, p. 2).

This actor-specific approach rejects the simplification that such decision-makers are assumed to be unitary rational actors equivalent to states. As a result, the basis of international relations can be further explored after understanding the nature of the FPA subfield. Hudson’s explanation strengthens the argument that in the context of Indonesia's foreign policy in Africa, it cannot be simplified. Because basically the actors involved in foreign policy are not unitary rational actors. A specific approach is needed to understand changes in Indonesia's foreign policy behavior in Africa, especially in narrating south-south cooperation.

Thus the FPA approach focuses on the processes and outcomes of human decision- making that relate to or have consequences for foreign entities. The scope of analysis is limited to decision-making by those who have the authority to allocate resources. Often the FPA analysis focuses not only on a single decision or non-decision, but also on a series or pattern of decisions made in relation to a particular situation. The focus is on the decision- making process, including problem recognition, framing, perception, goal prioritization, and option evaluation. Typically FPA excludes involuntary actions or decisions that do not have an international component.

According to Hudson, the uniqueness of the FPA approach in emphasizing the role of the agent sees that the state is not an agent but rather an abstraction that lacks agency. It is humans who are the true agents, and this human agency is the source of all the dynamics of international politics and the changes within it. She said that:

“It is also true that the ground of the human decision makers leads us toward an emphasis on agent-oriented theory, this being a fifth hallmark of FPA. States are not agents because states are abstraction and thus have no agency. Only human beings can be true agents, and it is their agency that is

the source of all international politics and all change therein.” (Hudson, 2005, pp. 2–3).

Hudson then gave an example by citing one of Alexander George's writings about "The Cuban Missile Crisis" which uses an actor specification approach. This approach rejects the “black box” of decision-making. In the Cuban missile crisis, the humans involved cannot be equated with generic actors who act solely to rationally maximize utility. This also means that those decision-makers are not equivalent to the countries they represent. To explain this crisis, specific and concrete information about the decision makers in the three countries (USSR, USA, and Cuba) is needed and not just general and abstract information (George, 1993, 1994).

This assumption drives FPA to emphasize the role of human agency in international relations. The actor-specific theory approach is relevant for understanding changes in Indonesian foreign policy under SBY and Jokowi in narrating the SSC in Africa. This perspective asserts that Indonesia is not an agent, but rather an abstraction, while actors such as leaders and decision-makers are the primary sources of international political dynamics. As Alexander George explained in his study of the Cuban Missile Crisis, important decisions are heavily influenced by specific actors. Therefore, changes in Indonesian foreign policy can also be analyzed using a similar approach.

Although criticized for its heavy analytical burden (McClosky, 1956) and perceived incompatibility with mainstream IR theory (Waltz, 1986), FPA scholars consider this approach to be a positive contribution to the study of IR. By emphasizing individual agency, FPA offers a more detailed and contextual approach to understanding international political dynamics, compared to IR approaches that tend to be abstract and general.

According to Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin (1962), focusing on the decision maker as the object of analysis makes it possible to integrate theories from different levels of analysis. The decision maker becomes a central concept to connect various theories that previously only applied to certain segments of international politics, and also compose determinants of action based on individuals who represent the political community. Human decision-making operates in a context with two aspects: domestic (internal) factors and external (international) factors. These two factors seem to be separate before, but with this approach can connect the two (Snyder et al., 2002).

Snyder, Bruck and Sapin said that:

“We believe that the phenomena normally studied in the field of international politics can be interpreted and meaningfully related by means of (the decision- making approach) as we shall present it. It should be clearly understood that this is not to say that all useful work in the field must or can be done within the decision- making framework....However, and the qualification is crucial, if one wishes to probe the “why” questions underlying the events, conditions, and interaction patterns which rest upon state action, then decision-making analysis is certainly necessary. We would go so far as to say that the “why” questions cannot be answered without analysis of decision-making (emphasis in original)”. (Snyder et al., 2002, p. 7).

Snyder, Bruck and Sapin's explanation allows this study to place the leader as the main actor. By focusing on analyzing leadership styles factors, this paper tries to unpack the causes of changes in Indonesia's foreign policy behavior in Africa. This approach also allows this paper to understand the connection between domestic and international factors by placing the decision maker as the link. President SBY connects his domestic political agenda as a democracy with international political solidarity through normative power. Meanwhile, Jokowi is more inclined towards his domestic relations that focus on economic development with international market exploration through pragmatic economic partnership. This logic aligns with Putnam's two-level game concept.

By shifting the center of theoretical attention to human decision-makers, this analysis can link IR theory to the social and cultural constructs that exist in a society. The arguments of this cultural factor are also suggested by (Hudson, 1997; Katzenstein, 1996; Lapid & Kratochwil, 1997). In other words, the human-based approach in FPA opens up greater opportunities to answer key theoretical questions in the discipline of international relations. It not only enriches the understanding of state behavior, but also bridges different disciplines and levels of analysis to gain a more comprehensive and realistic understanding.

The actor-specific theory suggests that understanding how decision-makers define the situation is very important. This definition, according to Simon (1985), makes it easier for FPA scholars to understand rational responses, because the situation is well-defined. Without empirical studies, it is difficult to understand what kind of situation actors understand, so FPA provides the empirical studies needed to explain this challenge (Simon, 1985). As Simon suggested that:

“It is far easier to calculate the rational response to fully specified situation that it is to arrive at a reasonable specification of the situation. And there is no way, without empirical study, to predict which of innumerable reasonable specifications the actors will adopt.” (Simon, 1985, p. 303).

One of the challenges in the study of international relations (IR) is the agency-structure issue, as discussed by Carlsnæs (1992), Checkel (1993), and Wight (1999). Although no definitive conclusion has been reached, IR studies tend to emphasize structure over agency. This is where actor-specific theory comes into play, highlighting the importance of individuals in explaining major changes and creativity. In the context of Indonesian foreign policy, this debate also arises. FPA believes that focusing on agency provides a deeper explanation than relying solely on structure. Using this theory, this paper analyzes how SBY and Jokowi's creativity in narrating South-South cooperation in Africa cannot be explained solely through a structural approach.

Actor-specific theory positions individual factors as independent variables driving foreign policy change (the dependent variable), by examining how each president interprets domestic and global situations to achieve their interests. According to Most & Starr (1989), this approach explains variations in foreign policy despite similar structural conditions, through the concept of foreign policy substitutability. Without considering agency, it is difficult to understand the concept of accountability in IR, as reflected in the existence of international courts. Thus, actor-specific theory complements IR studies in explaining variation, change, creativity, and responsibility in global politics.

According to Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin (1962), international political phenomena should be analyzed through a decision-making approach, particularly to answer the "why" question in the study of international relations. Unlike natural sciences, social sciences emphasize agency, or the ability of agents to act differently. Therefore, approaches such as anthropology are needed to understand motivation, emotions, and problem representation. This approach is useful for analyzing Indonesian foreign policy under SBY and Jokowi, because it highlights the psychological factors of leaders rather than viewing the state as a single rational actor. SBY is considered democratic, while Jokowi is more pragmatic and oriented towards economic results. The thinking of Snyder, Rosenau, and Sprout emphasizes the importance of understanding foreign policy makers and their decision-making processes. Rosenau's challenge also contributed to the emergence of cross-national and multi-level theories in foreign policy studies.

The Comparative Foreign Policy (CFP) method, influenced by behavioralism, became the basis for comparing Indonesian foreign policy behavior during the SBY and Jokowi eras.

The goal of CFP is to build a universal theory that explains foreign policy behavior across countries and time. While ambitious, this approach encourages innovation in theory, big data collection, and analytical methodology. However, critics argue that CFP tends to ignore individual contexts and complexities. Therefore, this study combines CFP methods and actor-specific theory to explain changes in Indonesia's behavior in narrating South-South cooperation during the SBY and Jokowi eras.

Hudson's premise about actor-specific theory is also supported by Jervis (1976) who states:

“if states of the same type behave in the same way, the changes in a state's leadership will not produce significant changes in foreign policy, and we need not examine the images, values, and calculations of individual decision-makers.” (Jervis, 1976, p. 22).

Then Jervis also emphasized on the perception and thinking style of leaders that play an important role in navigating the direction of a foreign policy. According to him, the dynamics that occur in international relations are not merely the result of the international system, but also the leader's interpretation in interpreting the world (Jervis, 1976). Ripsman et al. (2016) suggested that a leader's perception is important to understand, because these leaders will respond to external stimuli (threats or opportunities from outside) subjectively. Information from outside will usually be filtered by the leaders through the leader's perspective or their "cognitive glasses", so that different perceptions will produce different foreign policies, even though faced with the same situation (Ripsman et al., 2016).

Studies of changes in Indonesian foreign policy behavior within the SSC narrative with Africa are still dominated by structural or institutional approaches that ignore the role of individual actors, particularly the characteristics and perceptions of leaders. However, as Hudson (2005) emphasized, an actor-specific approach in Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) provides space to understand how personal preferences, perceptions, and orientations of leaders are key factors that cannot be explained solely through international structures.

Three main variables, leadership style, leadership orientation, and

psycho-milieu, are used as methodological and theoretical foundations because each captures different dimensions of the agent (leader) construct in foreign policy formulation. These three are interrelated and form a causal mechanism that explains whether Indonesia's SSC narrative tends to be normative or pragmatic under the leadership of SBY and Jokowi.

Without these three variables, explanations of changes in the SSC narrative would be partial and trapped in structural determinism. Therefore, its use is in line with the FPA literature that emphasizes the importance of a multidimensional approach combining aspects of personality, strategic preferences, and leader perception constructs to answer the “why” questions behind differences in state behavior (Snyder et al., 2002; Ripsman et al., 2016; Hudson, 2005).

### **2.2.2. Leadership Style in Foreign Policy**

Some foreign policy analysts define leadership style as a consistent pattern demonstrated by a leader in understanding the world, information related to the international world, and interacting with advisors during the foreign policy decision- making process (Hermann, 1980, p. 10; Hudson, 2005; Mintz & DeRouen Jr, 2010, p. 115).

Mintz & DeRouen Jr, 2010 argued that:

“Powerful individuals have the authority to make important decisions. Analyzing leadership style helps us to understand why certain decisions are made by leaders and why alternative courses of action are not taken. It also helps us to understand the decision process itself” (Mintz & DeRouen Jr, 2010, p. 115).

This approach is based on the assumption that individuals, especially chief executives such as presidents or prime ministers, play a major role in shaping foreign policy, especially in political systems that center on personal leadership. In this perspective, leadership style is not solely determined by innate traits, but is also influenced by life experiences, cognitive structures, and the leader's perspective on power and external threats (Crabb & Mulcahy, 1988; George, 1969; Kaarbo & Hermann, 1998; Peterson, 1994).

In the study of political personality and foreign policy analysis, the Leadership Trait Analysis (LTA) approach is a very useful framework for understanding how a leader's psychological traits contribute to his or her foreign

policy behavior patterns. LTA analyzes seven main dimensions, including self-confidence, need for power, bias toward one's own group, belief in control over events, conceptual complexity, distrust of outsiders, and task orientation. Through the combination of these indicators, researchers such as Hermann and Çuhadar et al. have developed leadership style typologies such as strategic, expansionistic, directive, incremental, evangelistic, and opportunistic. Each reflecting a distinctive relationship between personality, risk perception, and how leaders respond to international challenges (Çuhadar et al., 2021; Hermann, 1980).

This typology can also be related to the model proposed by Mintz and DeRouen Jr., who classify leaders into the categories of crusader, strategic, opportunist, and pragmatic. This classification focuses on the extent to which leaders are open to new information and how they respond to political constraints. For example, pragmatic leaders tend to operate within existing political frameworks and do little to innovate policies, while crusader types show high ideological conviction and resistance to alternative information or views (Mintz & DeRouen Jr, 2010).

Based on the integration of these two approaches, this study uses an additional conceptual model of normative and pragmatic leadership styles in response to the dynamics of South-South relations. The normative style refers to a type of leadership driven by ideological beliefs and certain moral goals in foreign policy, such as the spread of democratic values, human rights, multilateralism, peace, global solidarity, global justice, or multilateralism. Leaders with this style exhibit a combination of high levels of self-confidence, a strong need for control over events, and a low bias toward domestic pressures, with moderate to high cognitive complexity. This style is in line with the evangelistic type in LTA and the crusader in Mintz & DeRouen Jr.'s classification, but with a stronger focus on international values brought into diplomatic practice. Some scholars also conceptualize normative leaders as leaders who focus on the dissemination of international moral values, norms and principles (Brigg et al., 2016; Fitriani, 2017; Karim, 2017; Laksmana, 2018; Shekhar, 2018; Sukma, 2011; Tan, 2013; Tow & Parkin, 2007; Weatherbee, 2016, 2017).

In contrast, the pragmatic style in this framework reflects leaders who are highly responsive to domestic and global realities, have high conceptual complexity, but tend to avoid risks and act within existing political constraints. This style is parallel to opportunist and pragmatic leaders, but in the context of

South-South relations, pragmatic leaders emphasize concrete economic benefits, short-term stability of relations, and efficiency in implementing international cooperation without carrying a strong ideological content (Agastia, 2021; Arif, 2021; Bland et al., 2022; Connelly, 2014; Madu, 2017; Shekhar, 2018; Tomsa, 2017; Warburton, 2016; Weatherbee, 2016; Wicaksana & Wardhana, 2021).

The selection of two types of leadership styles, namely normative and pragmatic, in this study is based on the need to comprehensively understand the leadership response to the dynamics of SSC which has unique characteristics, such as the intersection between the idealism of global solidarity and national pragmatic interests. These two types were chosen because conceptually they are able to represent two main spectra in the leadership behavior of developing countries in foreign policy, especially in the context of South-South cooperation, which is often used for the normative or pragmatic interests of a country's leader.

By developing these two conceptual categories, this study attempts to explain the differences in leadership styles of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and President Joko Widodo in shaping the direction and intensity of foreign policy towards Africa. This model allows for a sharper understanding of how leadership style can shape the direction of Indonesia's foreign policy. From this discussion, it can be understood that the concept of leadership style is a leader's behavioral pattern in understanding the information related to international issues, perceiving the world, responding to political pressure, and making foreign policy decisions.

### **2.2.3. Leadership Orientation**

In foreign policy studies, leadership orientation is an important variable that influences how a leader formulates and makes foreign policy decisions. This orientation refers to the tendency of values, perceptions, and strategic preferences of a leader in responding to challenges and opportunities in the international environment. Foreign Policy Scholars classify leadership orientation into two main categories, namely context-driven and goal-driven. On the one hand, context-driven leaders are more careful and flexible in dealing with situations. They tend to prioritize discussion and consultation, and they are open to considering various alternative solutions. In addition, they adapt their behavior to the context at hand and take into account the views of different interest groups. When making important decisions, they actively build international

coalitions. On the other hand, goal-driven leaders tend to solve problems directly, are task-oriented, and focus on achieving missions and goals without considering compromise or situational context too much. They also generally do not rely too much on international coalition support. Thus, leadership orientation becomes one of the significant analytical lenses in understanding variations in foreign behavior between countries (Hermann & Hermann, 1989, p. 366; Kaarbo & Hermann, 1998, pp. 248–256; Mintz & DeRouen Jr, 2010, pp. 115–116).

In other words, context-driven leaders are more adaptive and responsive to political dynamics, both at the domestic and international levels. They tend to be open to consultation, cross-actor discussions, and building international consensus and coalitions before making important decisions. Meanwhile, leaders with a goal-driven orientation tend to prioritize achieving specific goals directly. They are assertive, task-focused, and often make unilateral decisions without much reliance on international support. This style usually shows a structured and outcome-oriented decision-making pattern.

This approach is in line with the findings of Margaret G. Hermann (1980), who developed a leadership trait analysis (LTA) model to identify leadership characteristics based on psychological dimensions such as complexity of information, belief in ability to control events, and task vs. relationship focus. Hermann showed that leaders who have a strong belief in controlling the environment and think simply tend to be goal-driven, while those who think complexly and are open to new information tend to be context-driven (Hermann, 1980). Furthermore, Alexander George (1969) emphasized that leadership style can influence the way a president or state leader processes information and chooses policy responses, both in crisis contexts and routine situations. He distinguished between problem-solving and maintenance-oriented leaders, which has similarities with the goal-context typology (George, 1969).

The contribution of Walker et al., (1998) through the operational code analysis approach also provides an additional dimension to leadership orientation, by examining the basic beliefs of leaders about the nature of the political world and the strategies that are believed to be effective in achieving national goals. Leaders who believe that the world is confrontational and controllable are more likely to be goal-driven, while those who see the world as an arena of negotiation and uncertainty are more inclined towards context-driven leadership.

In the context of this research, the leadership orientation framework

becomes a crucial analytical instrument to understand the differences in Indonesia's narratives and approaches in South-South Cooperation (SSC) in Africa during the administrations of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) and Joko Widodo (Jokowi). The different leadership orientations of the two leaders have direct implications for how SSC is positioned, narrated, and implemented as part of Indonesia's foreign policy in Africa. Thus, leadership orientation not only reflects the personal preferences of leaders, but also becomes an important lens for understanding how a country's foreign policy is formed and implemented. This framework is very relevant in comparative analysis between country leaders, especially in explaining changes in foreign responses to similar issues or crises.

#### **2.2.4. Psycho-Milieu**

Sprout & Sprout (1957) define psycho-milieu as the policy maker's perspective, perception, and interpretation of the surrounding environment. This is different from the operational environment which refers to the objective environment that really exists out there. The milieu is all external elements that influence certain units such as countries, policymakers, and institutions. In other words, foreign policy is not solely shaped by objective reality, but rather influenced by how actors understand and respond to that reality. This approach suggests that policy-makers act based on their "pictures in their heads". This is a form of mental representation formed from information they consider relevant from past experiences, ideology, and political biases. Therefore, in this framework, foreign policy is understood as the result of the interaction between milieu and the perceptual process of the actor. According to Sprout and Sprout, the milieu encompasses all non- hereditary external factors that can influence the actions of policymakers. These external factors can include geographical conditions, economic structures, public opinion, political institutions and also human actors. They said:

“What phenomena are included in the milieu depends in part on how one defines the envired unit. If, for example, the unit is a formal agency of government or some ad hoc policy-making group in the government, a great many factors physically internal to the state as well as factors external thereto may be significantly relevant elements of the milieu...” (Sprout & Sprout, 1957, p. 311).

This study makes President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) and President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) as the main environmental unit or unit of

analysis, where the psycho- milieu concept is used to trace their perceptions, interpretations, and personal narratives of South-South Cooperation (SSC) with African countries. By using this approach, the study starts from the assumption that foreign policy is not a direct reflection of objective conditions (operational environment), but is the result of the cognitive and psychological construction of key decision makers.

In the context of a modern state, state actors do not make decisions individually in a vacuum. The president as a key actor in the formulation and execution of foreign policy is in continuous interaction with both the domestic and international environment. In addition, the president also interacts intensely with the inner circle of policymakers including special advisors, foreign ministers, intelligence chiefs, military chiefs of staff, and other senior officials who all influence the president's perceptions and strategic considerations. Nevertheless, the final decision is still processed and filtered through the president's cognitive framework and personal perception of the reality they face (Smith et al., 2016).

This group is not only part of the objective milieu, but also becomes the main source of information, issue framing, preference validation, and even political legitimacy. However, the most crucial thing is how the president views and interprets the credibility, motives, and relevance of the input they provide. This process is part of the president's psycho-milieu. Thus, advisors are not merely external elements, but can be categorized as part of the "internalized environment", namely the layer of the environment that is closest and has direct access to the president's thoughts, beliefs, and intuitions. In the psycho- milieu spectrum, they occupy the closest and most influential position, especially in crisis conditions or when objective data is limited. This framework is in line with the cognitive behaviorism approach developed by Harold and Margaret Sprout, which emphasizes that:

“A person reacts to his milieu as he apperceives it that is, as he perceives and interprets it in the light of past experience.” (Sprout & Sprout, 1957, p. 314).

In other words, decisions in foreign policy are not solely determined by objective conditions, but rather by how an actor imagines and perceives those conditions. Therefore, psycho-milieu reflects a mental map or cognitive

representation of the environment, which is unique and subjective to each individual. Through this approach, the study seeks to understand how SBY and Jokowi perceive Africa, whether as a historical solidarity area (as in SBY's perception), or as a strategic market for economic development (as seen in Jokowi's orientation) and how these perceptions influence Indonesia's strategy, narrative, and diplomatic intensity towards Africa.

This means that internal human actors of the state including advisors or senior officials can be part of the milieu, depending on who is made the enviroined unit (e.g. the president or a group of policy makers). To operationalize the type of psycho-milieu in foreign policy, this study uses the Small Group Dynamics approach. According to Hudson (2005, pp. 16-18), actor-specific theory cannot be separated from the process of social and psychological interaction in small groups of decision makers.

Hermann (1980, pp.9-10) classifies the types of foreign leaders and advisors based on their level of cognitive complexity. Hermann defines cognitive complexity as a person's ability to understand and organize diverse and complex information and the ability to see multiple perspectives on a policy issue. Leaders or advisors with a high level of cognitive complexity are able to consider various alternatives and scenarios and integrate various policy dimensions holistically. Hermann suggested that individuals with high cognitive complexity tend to have a more reflective and strategic way of thinking, and are open to new information and dissenting opinions. In contrast, individuals with low cognitive complexity tend to think more simply, rely on quick solutions and are oriented towards short-term results. This definition is supported by Alexander George (1969, pp. 197-199) in his study of operational codes and advisory systems in foreign policy decision-making. George showed that small groups of decision-makers dominated by elites with high cognitive complexity will produce a more in-depth and analytical decision-making process. In such groups, decisions are made after exploring various options and long-term considerations.

In addition, Thomas Preston (2001) added that in a collaborative and analytical advisory system structure, advisors with high cognitive complexity tend to generate open discussions, logical arguments, and complex assessments of international dynamics. This is in contrast to more hierarchical and centralized groups, where cognitive complexity may be lower and decisions are based more on instructions than reflection. In Irving Janis' (1972) perspective on groupthink,

high cognitive complexity is also important to avoid excessive conformity and impulsive decisions. Small groups consisting of "thinkers" with high cognitive complexity are able to carry out vigilant decision-making that considers various alternatives and potential risks critically. Thus, cognitive complexity becomes an important variable in understanding the dynamics of small-group foreign policymakers because it affects how the group processes information, makes decisions, and ultimately shapes the direction of a country's policy.

Bailes et al. (2011) divide foreign policy actors into two types: thinkers and doers. Thinkers are academics and analysts with high intellectual freedom and a tendency toward normative positions, while doers are diplomats or officials focused on practice, speed, and concrete results. However, the two are no longer understood dichotomously because they are intertwined in the modern foreign policy process. These categories also reflect cognitive tendencies and information processing methods. If a leader is surrounded by thinkers, their policies tend to be cautious. Conversely, if surrounded by doers, their policies tend to be pragmatic and adaptive.

A study by Elizabeth Saunders (2017, pp. 226–230) supports this framework. She shows that the characteristics and experience of presidential advisors significantly influence the president's perceptions and decisions. Presidents and experienced advisors tend to make strategic and deliberate decisions (thinkers), while less experienced presidents surrounded by experienced advisors tend to make pragmatic and efficient decisions with little long-term consideration (doers).

This is reinforced by the findings of Hermann and Preston (1994, pp. 76-80) in their classic study *Presidents, Advisers, and Foreign Policy*, which states that the president's leadership style influences the structure and culture of the advisors around him, and conversely, the composition of advisors also shapes the president's decision-making style tendencies. Leaders who are more reflective and conceptual will attract advisors who are strategic thinkers, while pragmatic and operational leaders are more likely to choose advisors who emphasize quick execution and practical results.

Thus, the president's psycho-milieu in this study is operationalized as the result of the interaction between (1) the president's individual perceptual characteristics, and (2) the dynamics and functional orientation of his advisory circle. If a president is surrounded by a group of "thinkers," then his psycho-

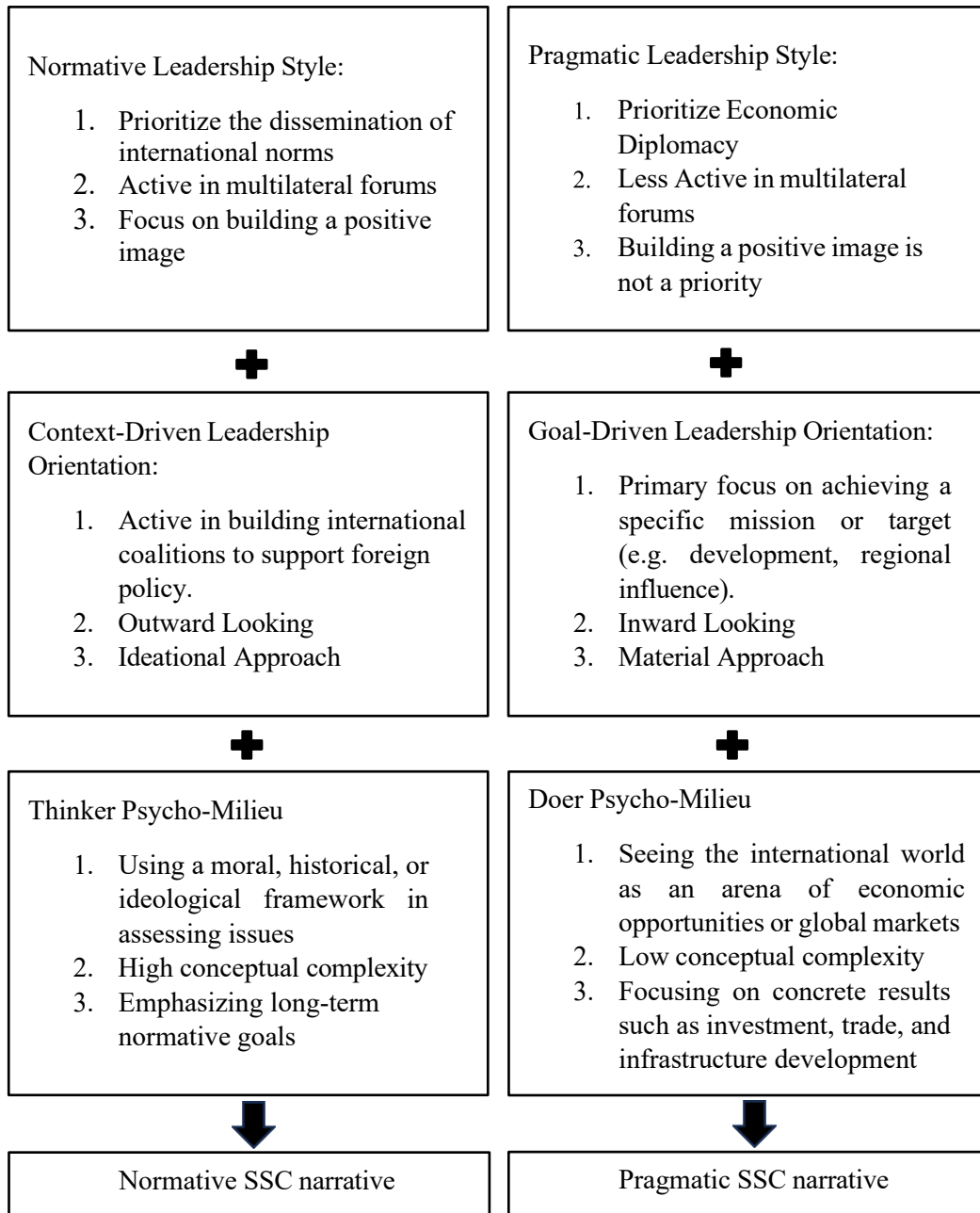
milieu will be more strategic and cautious. Conversely, if surrounded by “doers,” then the president’s perception will be more oriented towards policies that can be executed immediately and produce concrete impacts.

This framework will be used to compare the psycho-milieu of Presidents SBY and Jokowi in responding to opportunities for South-South Cooperation (SSC) cooperation with African countries. Differences in perception, narrative, and intensity of SSC policies in the era of each president will be traced as manifestations of two different types of psycho- milieu. The thinker-type psycho-milieu is characterized by a reflective, cautious, and multilateral decision-making style. Presidents with this type tend to view the international world as a moral and historical space, and view foreign cooperation as part of collective responsibility and global principles. Their foreign policy narratives are often normative, value-based, and emphasize national identity and a history of shared struggle (Mintz & DeRouen Jr, 2010; Saunders, 2017).

In contrast, the doer psycho-milieu is adaptive, pragmatic, and oriented towards concrete results. The international environment is perceived as an arena of competition and economic opportunity, where foreign policy is aimed at achieving measurable targets such as exports, investment, and development projects. Foreign policy narratives in this model tend to be technocratic, concise, and emphasize efficiency and immediate impact (Mintz & DeRouen Jr, 2010; Saunders, 2017). This typology was chosen because it is able to specifically capture how the combination of the president's psychological character and the dynamics of the advisory group around him produces different patterns of perception and foreign policy, especially in complex issues such as the SSC in Africa, which has both normative and pragmatic dimensions.

From all the variables above, this study tries to build a model that can explain how an actor can influence a foreign policy, especially in this context is the narrative of Indonesia's foreign policy in the framework of SSC in Africa. The following is the modeling table used.

**Table 2.1 Analytical Framework - Causal Mechanism between Actor-Specific Variables and Foreign Policy Narratives on South-South Cooperation (SSC)**



### 2.3. Research Argument (Hypothesis)

Changes in Indonesia's foreign policy behavior in narrating South-South Cooperation (SSC) with Africa during the presidencies of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) and Joko Widodo (Jokowi) are arguably influenced by actor-specific factors. Specifically, the leadership style, leadership orientation, and

psycho-milieu of the head of state. It is hypothesized that leaders with a normative leadership style, context-driven orientation, and thinker-type psycho-milieu tend to produce value-driven foreign policy narratives, while leaders with a pragmatic style, goal-driven orientation, and doer-type psycho-milieu tend to produce pragmatic, results-oriented foreign policy narratives that prioritize tangible outcomes and domestic interests. Thus, it is expected that SBY's normative leadership style, context-driven orientation, and thinker-type psycho-milieu lead to normative SSC narratives that prioritize the dissemination of values, moral principles, and international norms, while Jokowi's pragmatic style, goal-driven orientation, and doer-type psycho-milieu result in pragmatic SSC narratives that emphasize economic outcomes and national development.

## **CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1. Method**

This study uses a qualitative research method with a descriptive approach. The goal is to explore and understand the meaning of a social issue, with a focus on open data collection through literature review, text or image analysis, and emphasizing personal interpretation of research findings. Because it is qualitative, the author views the research phenomenon using constructivism as a worldview. This view believes that every human being in the world always tries to understand the phenomena in the world. By seeking answers to these phenomena, humans develop subjective values based on their experiences. In his writings, John W. Creswell states that there are several factors that influence a researcher to determine a paradigm. Among them, first, the field of science studied by the researcher, second, support from the supervisor and faculty for the researcher. Third, experience from previous studies (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The type of data used is primary data and secondary data or literature study. Where the data is usually explained with words or pictures in a document, book, or transcript. In writing, these data will complement each other in answering the research problem statement (Klotz et al., 2008). In the process of collecting qualitative data, the author uses several techniques. 1) Interview, the researcher conducts an open and unstructured interview then the results of the interview will be recorded. The interview process is carried out both physically and non-physically such as via email, or telephone. The author will use the purposive sampling technique to determine the interviewees in the interview process. 2) Documentation, researchers collect data through previous documentation, such as in newspapers, journals, papers, books, biographies, diaries, letters, and emails. 3) Audio-Visual Materials, researchers collect and analyze various information obtained through photographs, video recordings, e-mails, messages, cell phones, or art objects.

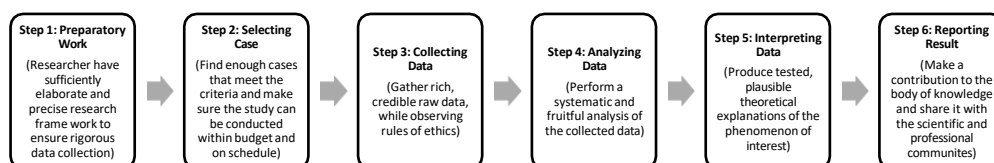
### **3.2. Case Selection**

According to John Gerring, case study has various meanings (definitional morass), where researchers understand case studies in their own ways. For example, Robert Yin understands case studies as an empirical research method that investigates contemporary phenomena deeply and in the context of reality,

especially when the boundaries between phenomena and contexts are not clearly visible. This means that case studies are intended to capture the level of detail and understanding of a phenomenon. This method can be used for descriptive, explanatory or exploratory purposes (Yin, 2007). Saul McLeod in his work "Case Study Method" emphasizes that case studies are used to investigate in depth about a person, group, event or society. The data used usually includes various sources and uses different methods such as observation and interviews. Research can be conducted over a long period of time so that the process and development of the case can be studied. The case study method often involves methods of observing what happened or reconstructing the "historical case" of a single participant or group of individuals, commonly known as the idiographic approach (McLeod, 2015).

Yves-Chantal Gagnon explains that a case study is a research method that observes and analyzes a phenomenon holistically to deeply understand the actors, their feelings, and their interactions (Gagnon, 2010). John Gerring emphasizes that a case study is an intensive study of a unit or phenomenon that is limited in space and time, such as a country, a revolution, a political party, or an individual (Gerring, 2004). From these various definitions, a case study can be understood as a method for uncovering a single phenomenon in depth and detail, generally using qualitative approaches such as narrative and interpretive analysis. In the context of this research, a case study is used to explain why there are differences in Indonesia's foreign policy in narrating the SSC in Africa under two different presidential leaderships. The stages of implementing the case study will be explained next.

**Figure 1. Case Study Research Process (Gagnon, 2010)**



### 3.3. Data Collection

#### 3.3.1. Interview Method

According to Margaret C. Harell and Melissa A. Bradley, the interview method basically always involves discussion, which is usually face-to-face

between the interviewer and an individual (source or respondent) with the aim of obtaining information on a particular topic to be used as research data for the interviewer (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). Through the interview process, researchers can obtain factual data about a phenomenon or event to obtain opinions or views from interview participants. In addition, the interview method can be used by researchers to confirm data or information obtained through other methods, such as data from observations (Bakry, 2016).

This study uses a semi-structured interview model. This means that the interview method used by researchers has a certain level of flexibility by maintaining the basic structure throughout the interview process. The reason for using this semi-structured model is because the theme discussed in this study is Indonesian foreign policy, where this interview will be aimed at elites such as ambassadors, diplomats, bureaucrats at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, national business actors and several non-governmental institutions. Semi-structured interviews allow researchers to cross-reference between respondents, and also help researchers explore more deeply the issues being studied. During the interview, researchers limit the scope of responses through a menu of questions and answers asked to avoid pitfalls that are often present in semi-structured interviews.

The interview method in qualitative research is believed to provide an in-depth understanding of a social phenomenon, especially when the researcher is unfamiliar with the topic under study and requires information from informants (Gill et al., 2008). This method is also appropriate when the issues being discussed are sensitive or closed within a group. In the context of this research, interviews were conducted with individuals who had the capacity to provide relevant data, based on their position, experience, and understanding of Indonesia–Senegal cooperation. To enable informants to convey their views, experiences, and attitudes, the researcher needed to organize the interview situation well. Preparation was carried out through briefings and question-and-answer sessions. During the interviews, the researcher used a flexible interview guide with free-form, semi-structured, and brief questions to encourage open, spontaneous, and lively responses, while engaging in active listening (Kvale, 1996).

### **3.3.2. Document-Based Method/Documentation**

This method uses documents that provide information about a particular social phenomenon that exists independently of the researcher's actions. According to Peter Burnham et al. there are three types of documents: primary document, secondary document, and tertiary document (Burnham, 2008). According to Piergiorgio Corbetta documents can be classified into personal documents and institutional documents. Personal documents are documents created by individuals for personal purposes (usually in the form of diaries, letters, autobiographies) this includes oral testimony and life history. While institutional documents are documents produced by public bodies. These documents contain evidence of life or culture created by the organization (Corbetta, 2003).

For the purposes of this study, researchers used primary and secondary documents as research data. Primary documents are original documents produced by individuals who have direct access to the information they describe, they research, or directly experience the event (Webb et al., 1975). While secondary documents are documents produced by people who were not present at the scene, but received information through interview mechanisms with eyewitnesses or by reading primary documents (Bailey, 1994). For example, if we attend a press conference by President Joko Widodo discussing Indonesia- China trade relations when President Jokowi visited Beijing, then the data we obtain is called primary data. However, if we obtain data on President Jokowi's statement from interviews with Ambassadors who attended the event, or through media reports (whose journalists were present at the press conference) then the document data is secondary (Bakry, 2016).

## **3.4. Analysis Method**

### **3.4.1. Narrative Analysis**

This study uses narrative analysis to explain the collected data, focusing on the role of individual leaders in narrating South-South Cooperation (SSC) in Africa. This approach explores the relationship between narratives, identity construction, and state action. According to Hinchman & Hinchman (1997), a narrative approach based on auto-ethnography and narrative writing through stories helps researchers understand the meaning of a phenomenon through field texts such as stories, journals, interviews, and field notes. The analysis process

begins with the development of research questions that highlight why and how a phenomenon occurs (Riessman, 2002). Therefore, this method was chosen to answer why and how Indonesia's foreign policy behavior varied during two different leadership periods in narrating SSC. The primary data comes from interview transcripts, field notes, or other sources that support narrative construction. To organize the data, a thematic approach is used to understand significant events and their impact on the actors constructing the narrative (Labov, 1991).

The second is the diachronic organization approach. This approach involves a story approach that focuses on the context in which the narrative is built. This approach comes with the inherent nature of the person telling the narrative, the context in which the narrative was created, the relationship between the narrative teller and others in the narrative, historical continuity, and the chronological organization of events. A story is built from narrative data that includes the beginning, middle and end of the process. As stated by Polkinghorne, narrative analysis uses narrative reasoning by forming data in narrative form and conducting in-depth analysis of each narrative itself, while analyzing narratives uses paradigmatic reasoning and theme analysis in narrative data (Polkinghorne, 1995).

The third is a functional approach that focuses on the role of narrative in serving different individuals. In this approach, Bruner suggests that narrative is considered as a way in which individuals construct and understand reality and the ways in which meaning is created and shared. This functional approach is important for narrative analysis because it emphasizes the narrative work factor that functions in helping individuals understand their lives. The focus of this form of analysis is the interpretation of events related to the narrative by the individual telling the story (Bruner, 1991).

## **CHAPTER IV RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1. The Emergence of South-South Cooperation (SSC) in Indonesia**

#### **4.1.1. South-South Cooperation Under Sukarno (Old Order)**

The narrative of South-South Cooperation (SSC) first emerged at the Asia-Africa Conference (AAC) on April 18–24, 1955, as a form of solidarity among Asian and African nations in opposing Western colonialism and reducing dependence on developed countries. For the first time in the 20th century, Third World nations united to build an anti-colonial movement and strengthen solidarity through the Non-Aligned Movement and the G77 under the UN (Assie-Lumumba, 2015). The SSC emphasized the principles of sovereignty, equality, non-intervention, and mutual respect among nations. This conference inspired newly independent nations to realize a just and peaceful world order (Ahmed, 1955).

Indonesia, as a pioneer of the AAC, demonstrated a firm stance against oppression and sought to transform the post-World War II global order (Phillips, 2016). President Sukarno viewed the Cold War between the Western and Eastern blocs as a threat to world peace, and the AAC was expected to ease tensions (Khudori, 2020). The Joint Communiqué of the Asian-African Conference emphasized the importance of technical cooperation, technology exchange, and the establishment of research institutions to support the development of developing countries (Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization, 1955).

The 1955 Asian-African Conference, which gave birth to the framework of South-South cooperation, seems inseparable from Indonesia's role. This is evident from the location and Indonesia's role as the host of the Asian-African Conference held in Bandung, West Java. This location in Indonesia became a historic place for the Asian-African nations in their fight against colonialism. The conference, known as the Bandung Conference, was led directly by Prime Minister Ali Sastroamidjojo and opened by President Soekarno. The proposal for the Asian-African Conference was also influenced by the sentiment that developing countries should have a proper place in discussions on global issues (Appadorai, 1955). A total of 29 out of 30 countries in the Asian-African region attended the meeting. Plans to hold the Asian-African Conference were initiated by Indonesia and several Asian country representatives at the Colombo Conference on April 28, 1954 (Diskominfo Kota Bandung, 2024).

The Colombo Conference was attended by India (Nehru), Indonesia (Ali Sastroamidjojo), Pakistan (Mohammad Ali Bogra), Sri Lanka (Kotelawala), and Burma (U Nu). This conference served as a precursor to the Asian-African Conference a year later, which included new leaders such as Zhou Enlai (PRC) and Gamal Abdel Nasser (Egypt). Central figures such as Sukarno, Nehru, U Nu, Zhou Enlai, and Nasser played crucial roles in organizing the conference (Tan & Acharya, 2008). Indonesia hoped that the conference would foster the independence of Asian-African countries from colonialism and produce the Bandung Principles, which emphasized human rights, sovereignty, and world peace. The participants' commitment strengthened Asian-African solidarity and increased recognition at the UN, including the voice of former colonies in the international system (Khudori, 2020).

Indonesia's participation also enhanced its international image, particularly among countries struggling for independence (Acharya, 2014a). In contemporary diplomacy, the narrative of South-South Cooperation reflects the principles of an independent and active foreign policy, strengthening Indonesia's position as a leader in developing countries, and supporting economic diplomacy and a just world order (Weinstein, 2007; Wicaksana, 2016). For political elites like Sukarno, the values of SSC must be passed on to the next generation of leaders. Therefore, Indonesia's foreign policy in Africa is inseparable from the history of SSC, which continues to be adapted to national interests. However, academics highlight the challenges in implementing SSC going forward (Alden et al., 2010; Wulandari, 2022).

The economic crisis of the 1970s, including the oil crisis, as well as the neoliberal structural adjustment programs of the Washington Consensus, slowed South-South cooperation (SSC), as many developing countries focused on domestic stability (Engel, 2019). However, the SSC community continued to develop institutionally through the Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC), which was based on the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) of 1978. BAPA upholds anti-hegemonic values and encourages national and collective independence of developing countries as the basis for a new international economic order (Gosovic, 2018). For Indonesia, SSC is not just a transfer of expertise, but also contains the meaning of the political struggle of the nation's founders. According to Morvaridi and Hughes, BAPA reflects two main political meanings: building solidarity among Southern countries and opposing

exploitative and neo-colonial practices of Northern countries and corporations (Morvaridi & Hughes, 2018).

#### **4.1.2. South-South Cooperation Under Suharto (New Order)**

The enthusiasm for developing South-South cooperation in Indonesia's foreign policy tended to decline during the Soeharto Era (New Order). Where the domestic crisis in the 1980s forced Indonesia to submit to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Paramita, 2019a, p. 41). Indonesia's decision to submit to the financial scheme of global northern actors has raised doubts since the 1970s about its commitment to developing South-South cooperation. Indonesia's status as a non-aligned country should not depend on this choice (Weinstein, 2007). However, President Soeharto also did not seem to want to abandon the spirit of South-South cooperation entirely. Therefore, in 1981, Indonesia formed the Indonesia Technical Cooperation Program (ITCP). The formation of this initiative was inseparable from the normative encouragement of the BAPA community and the competition between regional leaders and Malaysia (Winanti & Alvian, 2021, p. 19).

Suharto's motivation to use the South-South cooperation narrative in his foreign policy was inseparable from his domestic agenda, where political legitimacy and maintaining the power of the new order. Because in the 1980s to 1990s, Suharto began to lose political support because of his leadership style which tended to be authoritarian, there were cases of corruption, collusion and human rights violations (Paramita, 2019b, pp. 41– 42). International pressure on democratic values often became an obstacle for Suharto to maintain his power. Therefore, he used the narrative of South-South cooperation to show his support for the solidarity of developing countries. So that Suharto's image as a third world leader could be built and strengthen his legitimacy domestically (Engel, 2019).

After Suharto's resignation in 1998, Indonesia focused on the transition of government. At that time, Indonesia did not seem very active in narrating south-south cooperation in its foreign policy, because the government focused on improving its political and economic structure (Engel, 2019, p. 226). Until 2004, after SBY was elected as the sixth president and was elected directly for the first time, he began to revive the narrative of south-south cooperation (Hutabarat, 2023, p. 141).

#### **4.1.3. South-South Cooperation After The Reform Era**

With President SBY's globalist leadership style, he revived the narrative of South-South cooperation that had previously faded. SBY wanted Indonesia to be seen as a contributor to global peace and social justice that had been highlighted during the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference (Agheny & Barker, 2012). By making South-South cooperation an important theme in his foreign policy, SBY introduced the concept of "all-direction foreign policy". This concept shows Indonesia's active position in maintaining world peace and international cooperation and is independent in determining attitudes without pressure from other countries (Engel, 2019, p. 226).

SBY's concrete steps in reviving South-South cooperation were marked by the 50th anniversary of the Bandung conference in April 2005 in Jakarta. In this event, 89 countries agreed to the Declaration of the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership (NAASP) by committing to carrying out practical and sustainable cooperation, upholding the values of comparative advantage, equal partnerships and having a shared vision in overcoming global challenges (Asia-Africa Summit, 2005). Although SBY has revived South-South cooperation, he tends to give greater focus to the Asian region than Africa. In 2008, Indonesia became the co-chair of the working team at the Global South-South Cooperation Forum. The main agenda is knowledge sharing between the Global South countries and is facilitated by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation (OECD) – Development Assistance Committee (DAC). This forum not only facilitates technical assistance or funds, but there is an inclusive discussion forum on the experiences of various countries in the Global South in overcoming global challenges (Prabowo & Haryo, 2021, p. 124; Velasquez & David, 2024, p. 2).

The technical implementation of knowledge sharing in South-South Cooperation (SSC) is carried out through five mechanisms: (1) training/workshops to share successful policy practices; (2) study tours to observe firsthand practices in the field; (3) expert exchanges for technical assistance and learning; (4) documentation and digital platforms such as reports and webinars; and (5) triangular partnerships involving recipient countries, provider countries, and supporting developed countries (UNOSSC, 2022; Winanti & Alvian, 2021). Its objectives include strengthening context-based capacity (Narasimhan, 2007), promoting self-reliance, increasing development effectiveness, strengthening global solidarity, and bridging the knowledge gap through the documentation of

innovations (Al-Khatib, 2023).

Since 2003, SSC has evolved into South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC), bringing the old spirit but with new actors and practices, including the involvement of international organizations and developed countries (Morais de Sa e Silva, 2010). Currently, SSTC is receiving wider attention and is even being used by donor countries for their own benefit. The UN also established the UNOSSC as a dedicated agency for the development of the SSTC. The Joint Communiqué of the Asian-African Conference emphasized the importance of technical assistance, technology exchange, and research institutions among developing countries (Khudori, 2020; Lee, 2009). The SSC has become part of Indonesia's foreign policy identity, although its focus has shifted from collective independence struggles to pragmatic solutions. Although primarily inter-developing, project funding remains heavily dependent on developed countries, reflecting the persistence of old power dynamics within the SSC (Prabowo & Haryo, 2021).

At the beginning of its emergence, the SSC, which brought the norms of developing countries' struggle against the dominance of developed countries (global north), underwent a change in meaning over time. There was an existential threat from the capitalist world dominated by developed countries. However, developed countries cannot simply ignore the spirit of SSC that has been built on the solidarity of its pioneers, particularly the significant influence of China (Engel, 2019). To address this challenge, developed countries do not discredit SSC but acknowledge the initiatives of developing countries. Instead, they "tame" SSC by redefining its meaning as mere technical assistance aligned with the needs of developing countries to address global challenges (Assie-Lumumba, 2015, p. 6).

As a pioneer of the SSC, Indonesia strives to maintain the early spirit of South-South cooperation. In 2009, the Yudhoyono administration included the SSC in its landmark document, the "Jakarta Commitment: Aid for Development Effectiveness," as its aid roadmap until 2014, marking Indonesia's transition from a passive recipient to an equal partner, strengthening its position in global aid governance (Pujayanti, 2015; Engel, 2019). The SSC was also integrated into the 2010–2014 National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) as part of its national development strategy and diplomacy (Bappenas, 2010), demonstrating that Yudhoyono utilized the SSC not merely as a symbol, but as a strategic

instrument for national interests and the restoration of its global image after the New Order (Soeharto) era (Sukma, 2011; Engel, 2017; Triwibowo et al., 2025).

The SSC (or SSTC) was positioned as a complement, not a competitor, to North-South cooperation (Prabowo & Haryo, 2021), reflecting a shift from the spirit of the Bandung Conference to a more pragmatic approach (Abdenur & Da Fonseca, 2013). Jokowi continued the SSC in his Nawa Cita agenda (Parameswaran, 2014; Tahalele, 2015), and at the 60th Asia-Africa Conference, he criticized global inequality (Danubrata & Greefield, 2015). A comparison between SBY and Jokowi, two directly elected presidents who served two terms, highlights the contrast in the SSC narrative.

SBY championed multilateralism and established Indonesia as a moral leader for developing countries and a moderate diplomatic actor (Sukma, 2011), with a collaborative approach based on solidarity and non-confrontationalism (Shekhar, 2018). In contrast, Jokowi emphasized domestic interests, national development, and critiqued global inequality (Meloney C. et al., 2016), even calling international financial institutions outdated (Cabinet Secretariat, 2015). Jokowi utilized the SSC narrative to strengthen Indonesia's position as a middle-income economy and support the expansion of state-owned enterprises in Africa (Dorigné-Thomson, 2023).

Africa holds a strategic position for Indonesia historically, ideologically, and geopolitically. First, Africa played a role in the birth of the initial spirit of the SSC through the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference (Saputra, 2024; Tan & Acharya, 2008). Second, Africa shaped Indonesia's historical identity as a pioneer of the SSC and a moral leader for developing countries (Nauli, 2021; Madu, 2025). Third, Africa is relevant for development diplomacy and infrastructure cooperation, in line with Indonesia's role as a middle power (Dorigné-Thomson, 2023). The focus on Africa reflects Indonesia's historical continuity, ideological legitimacy, and strategic repositioning globally.

Unfortunately, the SSC narrative during the SBY era has not been seriously expanded beyond Asia. The primary focus remains on CLMV countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam) in the agriculture, education, and population sectors (Indonesia South-South Technical Cooperation, 2010). However, efforts to institutionalize the SSC are beginning to be seen with the establishment of the Directorate of Technical Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2006) and the SSTC Coordination Team (2010), supported by

JICA (JICA, 2013; Center for East Asian Cooperation Studies, 2010). A draft design and blueprint were developed in 2011 (JICA & PT Indokoei International, 2011). The involvement of traditional donors such as GIZ and USAID reflects efforts to influence new donors like Indonesia to adhere to DAC principles (Abdenur & Da Fonseca, 2013).

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#### **4.2. President SBY's Normative Leadership Style**

This study demonstrates that Indonesia's decision to narrate South-South Cooperation (SSC) in Africa as a form of promoting international values, standards, and moral principles (normative approach) is influenced by actor-specific factors, particularly the leadership style of President Yudhoyono, which reflects a normative style, a context-driven leadership orientation, and a thinker-type psycho-milieu. These characteristics tend to shape foreign policy narratives that emphasize values and norms. SBY views that through a normative approach, Indonesia can build engagement with African countries that are still facing various domestic challenges such as the democratization process, human rights violations, and internal conflicts. Using actor-specific theory analysis, this chapter discusses factors of SBY's personality, perceptions, beliefs, and leadership style.

To explain SBY's personality, this research refers to three indicators that conceptualize a normative leader. The first indicator, commitment to the promotion of moral values and principles at the global level (Fitriani, 2017; Laksmana, 2018; Shekhar, 2018; Weatherbee, 2016). In the context of this study, this type of leader actively encourages the dissemination of democratic values, human rights and good governance. This approach prioritizes the ideational approach which aims to form democratic and inclusive international norms. According to Laksmana, despite Indonesia's large territory and abundant natural

resources, Indonesia's approach is only normative and moral. Therefore, according to him, Indonesia is better known for its moral appeals, principles, or values that it promotes, and not because of its dominant military or economic power (Laksmiana, 2011). In The National Medium-Term Development Plan 2004-2009, SBY focused his foreign policy direction on strengthening Indonesia's position in international forums, supporting global peace, and emphasizing multilateral diplomacy (Muhibat, 2014; National Development Planning Agency, 2005). This is consistent with SBY's normative leadership style where Indonesian diplomacy is aimed at fighting for normative values such as democracy, peace, and global cooperation. Then, in The National Medium-Term Development Plan 2010-2014, SBY still prioritized the agenda of consolidating democracy at the national level. The goal is to position Indonesia as a large democratic country in international forums in an effort to maintain peace (National Development Planning Agency, 2010).

The values that SBY has believed in so far cannot be separated from his experience as a military soldier. Born into a military family, SBY pursued his military career by studying at academies in Indonesia and the United States. His experience of democratic values abroad and the transition from the New Order regime to democratization convinced SBY that the system that would bring prosperity to the Indonesian people was democracy (Supardi & Kurnia, 2009). During the presidential election campaign, SBY sang with the people, so he was known as a down-to-earth figure. With gentle and friendly gestures, the people saw that SBY could offer a new democracy. SBY's efforts were not in vain, in the legislative election on April 5, 2004, the Democratic Party won 7.45 percent of the vote and came in fifth. This vote then became the green light for SBY to participate in the presidential election on July 5, 2004, directly for the first time (General Elections Commission of Indonesia, 2004). With SBY's leadership considered democratic, SBY finally won the 2004 presidential election. SBY's trajectory with a military background and education in the United States, experience of the 1998 crisis, and serving as a Minister several times in the democratic transition era tend to influence SBY's normative leadership style (Yudhoyono, 2004).

SBY's commitment to promoting human rights and democracy values as his main agenda has been evident in his speeches. One of them was a speech in a conference on "Presidential Election in Indonesia" at the Shangri-La Hotel,

Singapore on May 26, 2004. SBY said that:

“Let me now speak a little about human rights. I am here to tell you that I am first and foremost a simple citizen of Indonesia who wants my children and grandchildren to have all the rights that they deserve. As President, I want to make sure that the laws respect personal freedoms and rights, for both men and women, rich and poor, across Indonesia. I also feel that my military background gives me a better prospect and position on how to further reform the military, so that all our officers and soldiers have a full respect for human rights. I devoted the last years of my military career drawing-up a blue print for military reforms of the TNI. For many years, I helped provide more and more training to our officers and soldiers on how to become more professional in the field.” (Yudhoyono, 2004, pp. 24–25).

The statement reflects Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's (SBY) belief that human rights are the rights of every citizen without discrimination, while also demonstrating his universal orientation and commitment to international norms. One concrete form of SBY's leadership in pushing the agenda of promoting democracy can be seen through Indonesia's efforts to advance the values of democracy and human rights in the ASEAN region, especially through the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) initiative. This initiative was initially introduced by Marty Natalegawa, who was then still a senior official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in 2003 under the name ASEAN Security Community (ASC) at the 9th ASEAN Summit in Bali in 2003. This initiative was first proposed by senior officials of the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including Marty Natalegawa, and was later officially developed in the Bali Concord II document (Putra et al., 2019). As it developed, the initiative was then adopted and refined into the APSC which was presented to the ASEAN community by Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda (Sukma, 2012, pp. 137–138).

The main objective of the ASC, which later evolved into the APSC, is to strengthen political and security cooperation among ASEAN member states in order to create a peaceful, stable, and democratic region. As stated in the official ASEAN document, the APSC is intended to ensure that “the people and member states of ASEAN live in peace with each other and with the outside world in a just, democratic, and harmonious environment (ASEAN, 2009). Conceptually, the APSC combines several important elements such as political development, norm shaping, conflict prevention, and post- conflict peace-building, which normatively represent democratic values and respect for human rights (ASEAN Secretariat, 2017). Thus, Indonesia’s push for the establishment of the APSC not

only functions as a strategy to strengthen regional security, but also reflects Indonesia's normative leadership in expanding democratic values to the regional level. This also shows that SBY's leadership utilizes the regional framework as an arena for promoting broader democratic norms, in line with Indonesia's identity as a post-reform democratic country.

Various literatures show that Indonesia's role as a promoter of democracy at the regional level cannot be separated from the ongoing democratization process in the country at that time (Murphy, 2012; Poole, 2015; Wirajuda, 2014). However, Karim (2017) assessed that there was not much evidence to show a strong push from the public to project Indonesia's democratic identity in ASEAN in 2003. During that period, promoting democracy was not yet a top priority, considering that President Megawati Soekarnoputri, who was still in office at that time, was more focused on organizing the complex domestic political situation.

Until under SBY's leadership, this initiative began to be revitalized into concrete actions through the ASEAN Charter. At the 11th ASEAN Summit in 2005, the ASEAN Charter proposal was announced for the first time. The emergence of this idea cannot be separated from Indonesia's diplomatic efforts in promoting democracy. The ASEAN Charter is considered to be a new mechanism for ASEAN member countries in solving problems. If previously this mechanism tended to be consensual or informal, then after the ASEAN Charter it changed into a more formal mechanism. In other words, Indonesia encouraged institutional change in ASEAN to become a rules-based organization that complies with a certain set of values including democratic values and also the promotion of human rights (Caballero-Anthony, 2008).

Even so, SBY at that time was still struggling to consolidate his democracy and internalize domestic democratic norms (Sukma, 2011a). The ASEAN Charter is an agenda of SBY and Indonesia's struggle in promoting the values of democracy and human rights so that they can be officially recognized as part of ASEAN's basic values. SBY's normative leadership is also shown by Indonesia's active role in encouraging the principles of democracy and respect for human rights to be included in the preamble of the ASEAN charter. SBY wants Indonesia to continue to fight for these values as the basic foundation of ASEAN and not just rhetoric (Ciorciari, 2012).

In the process of internalizing the ASEAN Charter, this proposal was initially accommodated in the recommendations of the Eminent Persons Group

(EPG) and then refined by the High-Level Task Force, namely representatives of ASEAN member countries to become the final draft of the ASEAN Charter (Koh, 2009). Unfortunately, Indonesia's efforts to promote democracy and human rights faced rejection from several ASEAN member countries (especially new members) such as Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam. Because Indonesia's proposal for the establishment of an ASEAN human rights body was considered to be able to intervene in several ASEAN member countries that still had authoritarian political systems (Weatherbee, 2013). Despite being rejected by several ASEAN members, SBY's agenda in promoting democracy and human rights seemed to have received full support from the domestic public (Karim, 2017).

Because he focused on the agenda of promoting democracy and human rights, SBY seemed less active in the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) agenda. In fact, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand were active in encouraging this ASEAN economic revitalization initiative. According to Rüländ (2016) there is concern from Indonesia that sees that AEC will make Indonesia only a market for other countries' products, because Indonesia has a very large domestic market, and Indonesian economic actors tend to be less competitive compared to other ASEAN countries. Therefore, many Indonesian economic actors doubt this regional economic integration initiative. Indeed, rhetorically SBY supports the AEC initiative, but in fact Indonesia has actually raised non-tariff barriers (NTBs) to protect the domestic market, especially after the global financial crisis (Chandra, 2016). In addition, several Indonesian political elites also oppose this AEC reform (Nazeer, 2015).

Meanwhile, findings (Emmers, 2014) show that the agenda of promoting democracy and human rights tends to be easily moved because there is no domestic rejection. This is what causes Indonesia's leadership under SBY to be limited to the fields of politics and security. While the economic field is more dominated by other ASEAN countries. Emmers also highlighted that Indonesia under SBY prefers an intellectual leadership model in the fields of politics and security to avoid domestic conflict. However, even though Indonesia's democracy and human rights promotion agenda under SBY has been very active, the results of this agenda have not been maximized in the region (Karim, 2017).

The second indicator is a preference for multilateral partnerships and a high need for affiliation. According to Keohane, multilateralism refers to the

coordination of national policies between three or more countries, usually carried out by international institutions or special arrangements (Keohane, 1990). According to Acharya (2004), multilateralism is an instrument to encourage, influence or facilitate norms or rules that apply in the international system. This means that multilateralism aims to create shared norms, values or standards of behavior in dealing with global issues (Acharya, 2004). According to several observers of Indonesian foreign policy, this multilateral approach is one of the characteristics of SBY's leadership, where SBY actively participates in various multilateral forums such as the UN, G20, Non-Alignment Movement, Bali Democracy Forum and others (Anwar, 2010a; Shekhar, 2018, pp. 11–12; P. J. Tan, 2007). This multilateral approach fits with SBY's normative approach, because the goal is to encourage shared standards of behavior in the international system. However, it should be noted that this study does not claim at all that SBY did not carry out bilateral cooperation at all. It's just that the preference for multilateralism is very dominant in SBY's foreign policy.

SBY feels that high affiliation with the international community is needed to solve global challenges. For example, SBY pushed for the 13th Conference on climate change in December 2007 in Bali, which then gave birth to the “Bali Road Map,” which became a reference for the implementation of the convention on climate change until 2012. In the G20 forum, SBY was active in promoting democratic and fair governance especially for the interests of developing countries. SBY saw that the multilateralism approach was not only limited to ASEAN and Southeast Asia, but must also include the geopolitics of East Asia, Asia-Pacific, and Indo-Pacific (Shekhar, 2018).

Geopolitically in the region, SBY promoted the East Asia Summit (EAS) to emphasize regional cooperation in the fields of politics and security. It was proven during Indonesia's leadership in ASEAN in 2011, Russia and the US joined this forum (antaranews.com, 2011b; Detiknews, 2011). In the same year, ASEAN also launched the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) as an effort to integrate the regional economy. From this effort, it is indicated that SBY's geopolitical perspective has expanded, reaching regions outside ASEAN such as East Asia, Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific. These regions are like SBY's concentric circles in increasing his affiliation with the international community (Shekhar, 2018, pp. 88–89).

SBY's need for high affiliation is also evident from his foreign policy

doctrine, concepts such as multiple reefs and turbulent ocean reflect how SBY perceives geopolitics and a dynamic world order full of uncertainty. Therefore, a foreign policy doctrine is needed that can maintain balance in the region and at the international level. Responding to the complexity that occurs, SBY introduced the doctrine of "thousand friends zero enemy" and "dynamic equilibrium," which emphasizes cooperation and ignores conflict or potential rivalry between countries (Anwar, 2014; Fionna et al., 2018, pp. 34–35).

In the concept of dynamic equilibrium first formulated by Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa, it has provided a clear intellectual basis for the direction of SBY's foreign policy which carries the concept of "thousand friends, zero enemy or commonly known as omnidirectional foreign policy. (Ciorciari, 2018) The reason SBY adopted this doctrine was considered as a form of Indonesia's adaptation to the global order that still upholds the values of the Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) from the Cold War era. Meanwhile, Natalegawa emphasized that dynamic equilibrium illustrates that in one region, there is no one dominant country, but more countries are involved in security, political, environmental, economic, and socio-cultural issues. This effort illustrates how SBY uses his multilateral cooperation to solve global challenges together (Shekhar, 2018, p. 95).

In his speech at the 18th ASEAN Summit, SBY said:

“at the beginning of the 21st century, we face very complex, diverse and cross-country challenges. The shift in geopolitical power is taking place dynamically..... Closer cooperation is also needed among nations, both intra and inter-regional, as well as in global forums” (Winarto, 2011).

According to him, it is very difficult to distinguish between national, regional and global issues. Likewise, between bilateral and multilateral issues. Therefore, SBY considered that this situation cannot be resolved at the national level alone. A comprehensive approach and better cooperation between countries in the Southeast Asia region are needed (antaranews.com, 2025b).

In a conference on "Presidential Election in Indonesia" at the Shangri-La Hotel, Singapore on 26 May 2004 SBY stated that:

“Let me say a few words now about Indonesia’s foreign policy. To be sure, foreign policy has not been a focus in Indonesia’s elections this year, but it goes without saying that our national agenda can be greatly advanced with international cooperation. As President, I will continue to promote Indonesia’s independent and active foreign policy. We will project Indonesia as an open, tolerant, modern, democratic, outward-

looking country with a strong voice for peace and justice in the international community. And Indonesia will remain steadfast as a frontline state in the international fight, and we will pursue active counter-terrorism measures, nationally, regionally and internationally against terrorism” (Yudhoyono, 2004).

SBY's speech indicates a commitment to universal (normative) values. SBY emphasized that Indonesia will be projected as an open, tolerant, modern, outward-looking country. This means that Indonesia's foreign policy is not only based on narrow national interests, but also universal values such as democracy, tolerance and justice. In the context of this speech, it can also be understood that SBY does not only emphasize domestic policies, but also directly links them to the international agenda. For example, SBY prioritizes the importance of global cooperation and involvement in world peace and the war on terrorism at the national, regional and international levels. These are the characteristics of a globalist leader who positions Indonesia as a country that is active in the global community and believes that Indonesia contributes to maintaining world order.

This preference for multilateralism can also be seen from how SBY is active in encouraging a multilateral and institution-based regional architecture as a way to manage the dynamics of great power and expand Indonesia's diplomatic space (Qin, 2015a). SBY tends to use ASEAN as the main multilateral platform. SBY believes that in order to maintain regional order, ASEAN needs to be made the center of collective cooperation and regional institutions. This is in line with SBY's preference to prioritize a multilateral approach that shows that there is no dominant actor in the scope of cooperation (Ciorciari, 2018, pp. 33–34; Fiona et al., 2018, p. 7; Shekhar, 2018).

SBY's inclusive style was reflected in the East Asia Summit (EAS), which involved major powers such as Australia, India, and the US, demonstrating strategic multilateralism to maintain regional stability and avoid conflict (Acharya, 2014b; antaranews.com, 2011a). This approach served not only as a diplomatic tool but also as a key framework for building a positive image and constructive relationships (Ciorciari, 2018; Lukman, 2023). According to Shekhar (2016), SBY wanted Indonesia to be a proactive actor in multilateral forums that upholds human rights, the environment, and democratic order.

In his speech at Wilton Park in 2012, SBY emphasized Indonesia's five global roles: norm setter, consensus builder, peacekeeper, bridge builder, and voice of the developing world (Yudhoyono, 2012b). Ciorciari (2018) states that

SBY strengthened the global order through complex interdependence, while Goh (2007) called his strategy omni-enmeshment, namely building the broadest possible interdependent network.

The strategy of building a positive image for Indonesia is not merely symbolic, but part of a deliberate diplomacy aimed at increasing trust and global bargaining power (Anholt, 2007). This image encompasses political stability, economic progress, culture, peace, and commitment to global issues such as climate change and human rights. Through active participation in international forums and domestic consistency, Indonesia aims to be known as a democratic, tolerant, and dynamic nation trusted by the world.

One of the main priorities of Indonesian foreign policy during the SBY era was building a positive global image, in line with the consolidation of democracy after the reform era (Vermonte, 2014). The country's identity as the third-largest democracy with a Muslim majority was leveraged as a diplomatic asset. This strategy was reflected in the Indonesian Foreign Policy Strategy Document 2005–2025, the initial phase of which (2005–2009) emphasized strengthening national identity as a democratic nation, and continued with Indonesia's active role in various global forums (Acharya, 2014).

The reform of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 2001 and the implementation of the concept of Total Diplomacy during the SBY era also strengthened this effort, involving the media, NGOs, and religious groups to enhance legitimacy and international perception (Ciorciari, 2018). SBY was also active in various forums such as the G-20, ASEAN, and the UN, and emphasized the diplomatic vision of "one thousand friends, zero enemies" in his 2009 inaugural address (Shekhar, 2016). Indonesia's positive image is systematically built through democratic identity, diplomatic reform, and active participation on the global stage.

In his first foreign policy speech in 2005, SBY firmly emphasized the importance of projecting Indonesia's national identity as the foundation of foreign policy. He defined Indonesia as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, the third largest democracy in the world, and a country that has succeeded in harmonizing democracy, Islam, and modernity. This statement not only shows a more open foreign policy direction, but also becomes part of a systematic strategy to build a positive image of Indonesia at the global level. Before the Indonesian Council on World Affairs (ICWA) on May 20, 2005,

SBY said:

“Indonesia’s international identity must be rooted in a strong sense of who we are. We must know who we are and what we believe in, and project them in our foreign policy. We are the fourth most populous nation in the world. We are home to the world’s largest Muslim population. We are the world’s third-largest democracy. We are also a country where democracy, Islam and modernity go hand in hand” (Anwar, 2018).

This positive image becomes even more important in the global context after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, when negative perceptions of Islam have become stronger in Western countries. In this situation, Indonesia, with its identity as a democratic and pluralist Muslim country, is seen as an alternative face of moderate Islam. Dewi Fortuna Anwar noted that the international community, especially Western countries, actively encourages Indonesia to take on the role of an alternative model for other Muslim countries and a bridge between the Islamic world and the West. SBY said:

“The new Indonesia would like to project these three characteristics as its new international identity, partly to counter the negative image, as well as to help dispel some of the negative stereotypes of Islam” (Anwar, 2018).

Efforts to build a positive image do not stop at the discourse level. Visits by high- ranking officials from the United States, England, the Netherlands, and the European Union to Indonesia throughout 2006 are empirical evidence that Indonesia's new image has received international recognition. In addition, Indonesia is also involved in various diplomatic initiatives, such as the Annapolis meeting for the Palestine-Israel issue, as a form of trust in Indonesia in playing a role as a representative of moderate Islam in international forums. (Anwar, 2018).

Thus, in the SBY era, Indonesia's foreign policy was not only directed at fulfilling short-term pragmatic interests, but was also used as an instrument to build a positive image that reflects Indonesia's identity as a democratic, tolerant, and modern Muslim country. This strategy is part of identity diplomacy that not only improves Indonesia's bargaining position on the global stage but also becomes Indonesia's real contribution to reducing global tensions between the Islamic world and the West.

#### **4.3. SBY's Context-Driven Leadership Orientation: Prudence and Consensus in Foreign Policy**

In foreign policy studies, leadership orientation is one of the important variables that influences how a leader formulates and makes decisions in responding to international dynamics (Mintz & DeRouen Jr, 2010). This orientation reflects the tendency of values, perceptions, and strategic preferences that form the basis of a leader in facing global challenges and opportunities. Referring to the classification of Mintz and DeRouen Jr. (2010), leadership orientation is divided into two main types, namely goal-driven and context-driven.

In this case, the leadership of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) consistently shows context-driven characteristics, where he prioritizes caution, flexibility, and adaptation to situations rather than simply pursuing short-term goals rigidly. As a leader with this orientation, SBY tends to avoid unilateral or confrontational decision-making patterns, and prefers to build discussions, consultations, and open space for various alternative solutions.

A key characteristic of a context-driven leader is the tendency to build international coalitions, a trait that was highly evident during President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's (SBY) leadership. This approach was reflected in Indonesia's active participation in various multilateral forums such as ASEAN, the G20, the Bali Democracy Forum (BDF), as well as Indonesia's diplomatic engagement in global issues like climate change and peacebuilding (Shekhar, 2018). By fostering international networks and coalitions, SBY not only strengthened Indonesia's position on the global stage but also ensured that Indonesia's foreign policy was inclusive and received broader international support, rather than being unilateral in nature.

A concrete manifestation of this approach was the establishment of the Bali Democracy Forum (BDF) in 2008, along with the Institute for Peace and Democracy. The BDF reflects SBY's strong commitment to promoting democracy beyond Indonesia's borders. As the first intergovernmental forum in the Asia-Pacific specifically dedicated to regional cooperation in democracy and political development, the BDF emerged as a response to the absence of a regional mechanism that encourages democratic values in the region (Anwar, 2010). In line with this vision, SBY, in his 2005 speech before the Indonesian Council on World Affairs (ICWA), explicitly emphasized Indonesia's new international identity following the democratic reform era: as a democratic,

Muslim, and modern nation. He underscored the importance of Indonesia's role in bridging the gap between the Islamic world and the West through inclusive dialogue and international cooperation (Anwar, 2010a).

To support the realization of this vision, the Institute for Peace and Democracy, a state-owned think tank, was established as part of the BDF framework. This institution works to translate SBY's aspirations into concrete programs aimed at sharing Indonesia's democratic experiences with other countries (Salim, 2012). Through these initiatives, SBY's leadership not only strengthened Indonesia's international standing but also positioned the country as a key player in promoting democracy and dialogue at the global level.

According to SBY, so far, cooperation in the East Asia and Asia Pacific regions has only highlighted the economic aspect, and has paid little attention to the political development aspect (Karim, 2017). Although India is a fairly large democratic country in the region, due to geopolitical considerations, India tends not to formulate its foreign policy to promote democracy like Indonesia (Mazumdar & Statz, 2015). This gap is what Indonesia wants to fill through the BDF as a form of regional cooperation in advancing democracy. The BDF forum also indicates that Indonesia wants to expand its role as a democracy promoter that not only focuses on ASEAN countries but also covers the wider Asia Pacific region. Initially, the BDF was intended for countries in the Asia Pacific region, but this initiative has attracted the attention of countries outside the region such as the Middle East, Eastern Europe, Africa and Latin America. The success of the BDF in attracting the attention of countries outside the Asia Pacific region shows that this forum has normative and strategic appeal that can strengthen Indonesia's position as a constructive and inclusive democracy in the region.

What is unique about the BDF is that it is not too formal or designed with a loose mechanism. The reason it was made not too formal was because SBY and Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda wanted the countries involved in the BDF forum to be able to share experiences and views on democracy openly without any coercion or pressure to implement certain democratic standards. The leniency of the BDF was also inseparable from SBY's desire not to have a perception from the outside world about Indonesia forcing a certain democratic model on other countries. SBY wanted to make this forum a place to share best practices in strengthening the democratization process in each country with diverse socio-political contexts (Karim, 2017; Kompas.com, 2010). Various observers tend to

compare the Arab Spring event with the reforms that occurred in Indonesia.

BDF I which was held in 2008 raised the theme "Building and Consolidating Democracy: A Strategic Agenda for Asia" emphasizing the importance of equal and constructive dialogue between countries (Sutiono et al., 2008). SBY in this case emphasized that the BDF is an open forum that does not impose a certain democratic model or discuss a single definition of democracy. Whatever form of political system that develops in each country is allowed to share experiences, thoughts and ideas that they have in order to strengthen cooperation in building democracy in this forum (Sutiono et al., 2008). SBY said that:

“This meeting is important to align perceptions about democracy between countries in Asia. In addition, this forum can be a learning bridge between countries because they have different experiences between countries in Asia,” (Kompas.com, 2008).

SBY saw that BDF did not formulate a rigid definition of ideal democracy, because this forum was designed inclusively for countries that had become democracies, aspired to become democracies, or were in the process of democratization. In the process of promoting democracy, SBY never forced other countries to follow or emphasize Indonesia's own history to other countries, but rather its nature was more of sharing that created a space for learning and socializing democracy. So SBY's approach was more facilitative and cooperative and not dominant or coercive. Efforts to promote ideas about democracy and human rights in the BDF forum seemed quite successful. Since BDF I was held in 2008 with participants of 32 countries/organizational representatives, it increased drastically to 95 representatives at BDF VI 2013 (Karim, 2017).

This achievement is inseparable from the inclusive nature of BDF, where even countries with authoritarian regimes can be involved. This uniqueness distinguishes BDF from other democracy promotion initiatives initiated by Western countries. However, according to (Carothers & Youngs, 2011), the inclusiveness of the BDF can actually provide a stage for authoritarian regimes to legitimize their political systems, which basically do not meet universal democratic standards. This weakness is what Indonesia considers to be the main strength of the BDF.

Responding to this, SBY emphasized that the BDF is not a forum to debate "a mutually agreed definition of democracy", but rather a forum to identify and discuss important issues relevant to strengthening democracy (Sutiono et al.,

2008). SBY utilized the inclusive nature of the BDF not only to become a democracy promoter but also as a bridge builder that connects the various differences of views regarding democracy between countries that have long been democratic, countries that are undergoing democratization, and countries that still have authoritarian regimes (Karim, 2017).

SBY's normative style in framing the BDF seems to be quite successful, because countries that were previously reluctant to talk about democracy such as Myanmar and Fiji, have now succeeded in starting to be open to constructive discussions without any pressure to follow a particular democratic model (M. M. Natalegawa, 2018, pp. 17–18). Indeed, BDF does not have a direct impact on the democratization process in Asia Pacific countries, but this initiative is considered to have opened an alternative path in terms of promoting democracy, especially for countries that are now considered emerging democratic powers. SBY's style that prioritizes soft power offers an alternative platform in promoting democracy that comes from the traditions or local values of non-Western countries (home-grown democracy) (Ciorciari, 2018, pp. 48–49). SBY shows great concern for global issues and tries to maintain a high profile in international diplomacy. SBY believes that being actively involved in international issues can strengthen his country's position in global politics (outward-looking). SBY's high interest in foreign affairs is reflected in the intensity of his personal involvement in various international forums.

Fealy (2015) highlighted SBY's message at the end of his term which stated that he was one of Indonesia's great presidents (perhaps the greatest) and equal to other world figures such as Barack Obama, Tony Blair, David Cameron, and Angela Merkel. The reason SBY considered himself comparable to world figures was because he had made a big impact in his own country while also playing an active role in global affairs. The claim as a global leader was based on SBY's achievements in stabilizing and consolidating democracy in Indonesia, supporting the eradication of corruption, overseeing the Aceh peace process, encouraging economic growth, and supporting law enforcement in handling terrorism issues.

In addition, the outward-looking orientation shown by SBY further emphasizes the context-driven character of his leadership. Foreign policy experts define outward-looking as a leader's orientation that emphasizes the importance of Indonesia's active involvement in the international stage, to maintain stability,

expand influence, and secure national interests in the era of globalization (Anwar, 2010a; Laksmana, 2011; Sukma, 2011b). SBY understands that in the era of globalization, active involvement abroad is not only a necessity, but also a strategy to strengthen Indonesia's competitiveness and legitimacy at the international level. Therefore, Indonesian diplomacy under SBY's leadership is not closed or inward-looking, but rather more proactive in building global connectivity.

At the presidential lecture at the National Resilience Institute in September 2015, SBY gave a speech that emphasized:

“By the end of the 21st century we will become a developed country. I am optimistic as long as we do not mismanage it for the next 30-70 years. If we mismanage it, it will not become a developed country... Whoever wants to lead Indonesia for the next 30-70 years, our hope is that they are resolute, visionary, outward-looking and uphold democratic” (Khafifah, 2015).

SBY's speech emphasized that to become a developed country at the end of the 21st century, Indonesian leaders must be like him, who have a foreign policy orientation that has a big vision (visionary), able to see far into the future and not get caught up in short-term pragmatic interests that often hinder sustainable development. In the midst of an increasingly connected and dynamic world, a leader is also required to have an open and outward-looking orientation, not confined by narrow domestic political dynamics. This openness is important so that Indonesia is able to adapt, compete, and contribute to the global game.

However, the progress achieved must not sacrifice the basic principles of democracy. On the contrary, future leaders of Indonesia must be able to uphold democratic values (uphold democratic principles), as a foundation that ensures that the development process is inclusive, accountable, and in the interests of the people. With this combination of leadership characteristics, Indonesia will not only be able to take advantage of global opportunities but also maintain domestic stability and strengthen the foundations of democracy as a foothold towards the status of a developed country at the end of this century.

SBY's outward-looking leadership orientation can also be seen from the way SBY perceives democratic reform as not only a domestic matter, but also a shared agenda of the international community. SBY realizes that the weakening of democratic values and human rights in a country can have an impact on regional

stability and the international order. This explains why SBY is confident enough to be directly involved in the democratization process in Myanmar and also in mainstreaming democratic norms in ASEAN. Through an approach that emphasizes inclusive dialogue, multilateral cooperation, and peaceful solutions, SBY seeks to bridge the interests of countries, both democratic and non-democratic countries, Western countries (Global North) and Southern countries (Global South), as well as the West and the Muslim World (Yudhoyono, 2012a). SBY's involvement in multilateral forums is not only to promote democracy, but also because he believes that global problems that occur are the responsibility of the entire international community, and collective action is needed to face this challenge (antaranews.com, 2025a).

In 2009, SBY said that:

“no country perceives Indonesia as an enemy and there is no country which Indonesia considers an enemy. Thus, Indonesia can exercise its foreign policy freely in all directions, having a million friends and zero enemies” (Piccone & Yusman, 2014).

This statement shows that SBY has a consistent and structured outward-looking orientation, which makes active involvement in the international system the main instrument for achieving national interests. Indonesia's foreign policy in the SBY era explicitly emphasizes the characteristics of high politics, promotion of soft power, and efforts to improve Indonesia's strategic position in global forums. This orientation is reflected in various policy initiatives, such as the slogan "a thousand friends, zero enemies," active participation in ASEAN, APEC, ARF, and EAS, and multilateral diplomacy on global issues such as terrorism and climate change (Widiatmaja & Albab, 2019, pp. 84– 86). One of the main indicators of SBY's outward-looking orientation is his commitment to multilateralism, as shown in Indonesia's active involvement in international forums and efforts to mediate regional conflicts such as the South China Sea dispute through the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) and encouraging the formation of the Code of Conduct (COC) (Muliartha, 2011). In the fourth World Peace Forum (WPF) 2015 in Beijing, China, SBY stated that:

“Dialogue is very effective and is the best solution... Indonesia implemented this in resolving the conflict in Aceh, in the separatist

movement GAM (Free Aceh Movement) for 30 years” (Liputan6.com, 2015).

In the 24th ASEAN Summit, SBY stated that Indonesia was “morally called to play an active role” in maintaining regional stability (Widiatmaja & Albab, 2019, p. 85). This signifies a normative approach based on international values and responsibilities, in line with the principled pragmatism approach. In addition, SBY’s diplomatic strategy is also framed through the Concentric Circle Formula, which places ASEAN as the first circle of foreign policy priorities, followed by regional countries in the Pacific, and then global partners such as the United States and the European Union (Anwar, 2013). This pattern strengthens the narrative that SBY sees international relations not merely as an arena for power competition, but as a collaborative forum to build international trust and legitimacy for Indonesia.

Overall, SBY's outward-looking orientation is not only evident in political rhetoric, but also in the structure of foreign policy that emphasizes multilateralism, preventive diplomacy, and active involvement in the global community. This approach confirms that SBY's leadership is driven by a global vision that integrates national interests with Indonesia's constructive role at the international level.

Lastly, SBY's leadership also shows the dimension of the ideational approach, namely the tendency to frame foreign policy not solely based on material calculations, but also based on certain ideas, norms, and values, such as the promotion of democracy, peace, and dialogue between civilizations. This is in line with the context-driven character that not only considers the external situation, but also brings normative values into the formulation of foreign policy (Ciorciari, 2018, p. 47; M. M. Natalegawa, 2018, p. 16).

Thus, SBY's context-driven leadership orientation is one of the keys to understanding how Indonesia under his leadership tends to prioritize flexibility, international coalitions, and normative approaches in facing the complexity of global challenges. Under the leadership of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY), the tendency of the ideational orientation that influences the direction of Indonesia's foreign policy is clearly visible. Democracy is not only seen as a domestic political system, but also as a strategic identity that shapes Indonesia's image and position in the international world. This is reflected in various SBY initiatives, such as strengthening the ASEAN Political and Security Community

by highlighting human rights issues, initiating the Bali Democracy Forum as a space for sharing democratic experiences between countries in the region, and spreading the principle of "democratic instinct" as the foundation of Indonesian diplomacy (Fionna et al., 2018; Yudhoyono, 2010).

This approach shows that SBY's foreign policy is not solely driven by material calculations or short-term interests, but also by ideational perceptions of Indonesia's image as a constructive and globally trusted democratic country. As noted by Laksmana (2011) and Anwar (2010), this democratic identity is a source of Indonesia's soft power, while emphasizing that SBY's foreign policy was greatly influenced by ideational factors rooted in the values and principles he believed in (Anwar, 2010b; Laksmana, 2011).

Thus, it can be said that SBY's role in promoting democracy through ASEAN, BDF and his involvement in the Myanmar conflict is a manifestation of the personality of a leader actor who combines normative drives to uphold political ethics and morality with a globalist vision that emphasizes the importance of international collaboration in order to create a more just, democratic and sustainable global order (more ideational approach).

#### **4.4. The Thinker-Type Psycho-Milieu of President SBY: A Reflective Orientation in Foreign Policy Decision-Making**

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's (SBY) leadership in foreign policy reflects the characteristics of the thinker-type psycho-milieu, namely the personality and mindset tendencies of a leader that are characterized by a reflective and complex orientation in the decision-making process. This orientation is not merely pragmatic or reactive, but is supported by deep moral, historical, and ideological contemplation, and is demonstrated through a policy communication style that is closely related to symbolism and value considerations. This study uses three indicators that describe the Thinker-Type Psycho- Milieu.

First, the use of moral, historical, or ideological frameworks in assessing issues. President SBY is known to often frame international issues in moral and ideological narratives. One concrete example is SBY's emphasis on democracy as Indonesia's international identity. In various speeches, including at the World Movement of Democracy forum (2010), SBY referred to "democratic instinct" as a fundamental principle that must color the way Indonesia interacts at the global

level. Under SBY's leadership, Indonesia is not merely seen as an actor pursuing material interests, but as a democratic country that seeks to be part of the global solution through normative principles such as justice, sovereignty, and tolerance (Yudhoyono, 2010).

As the first President of Indonesia directly elected by the people in 2004, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) bears a great burden to oversee Indonesia's democratic transition while improving Indonesia's image and role on the international stage. To realize this, SBY implemented a foreign policy known as "all directions foreign policy" with the slogan a million friends and zero enemies (Ciorciari, 2018; Piccone & Yusman, 2014; Wihardja & Negara, 2018, p. 60). However, behind this policy, there are strong traces of SBY's reflective mindset as a leader with a Thinker-Type psycho-milieu, which is characterized by a tendency to use moral, historical, and ideological frameworks in understanding and responding to international issues.

This reflective orientation was not born in a vacuum, but was also influenced and strengthened by SBY's close circle who held similar views. In his first term, Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda consistently promoted the idea that Indonesia is living proof that "Islam and democracy can coexist", and encouraged dialogue between Muslim countries to learn from each other's experiences, including mistakes that could threaten the balance between Islamic values and democratic principles (Shekhar, 2018; Wirajuda, 2014). This statement clearly reflects the use of a moral and ideological framework in viewing Indonesia's position, not merely from a pragmatic strategic interest, but as part of a normative mission to demonstrate the compatibility of Islam and democracy at the global level.

This pattern continued in the second period of SBY's leadership through Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa, who explicitly stated that democracy is Indonesia's main strength in carrying out international diplomacy (Natalegawa, 2018). Natalegawa introduced SBY's active and constructive foreign policy approach in international relations. This means that SBY does not only focus on the country's direct interests but also on global interests. During SBY's leadership, Natalegawa also emphasized the concept of "intermediary" where there is a close relationship between the international and domestic environments (Natalegawa, 2018). In the early era of SBY's leadership, soft power diplomacy based on the principle of free and active became an instrument of SBY's diplomatic strategy.

Aware of the importance of strengthening democracy and active involvement on the global stage, SBY tried to bring Indonesia to be actively involved in several United Nations forums by becoming a member of 6 United Nations, including: the UN Security Council, the Peace Commission, the Human Rights Council and the Economic and Social Council. SBY's normative and globalist leadership style can also be seen in how he ended the conflict with the Free Aceh Movement through the Helsinki peace agreement on August 15, 2005, to the point of almost winning the Nobel Peace Prize (detikNews, 2006).

Thus, the promotion of democracy is not merely seen as a foreign policy tool, but as an expression of Indonesia's ideological identity that it wants to present to the world. Furthermore, this moral and ideological-based approach has received international recognition. The US Ambassador at that time, Dino Patti Djalal, who was also part of SBY's core diplomatic circle, stated that the Indonesia-US partnership was a form of constructive 21st-century relations that bridged "the West and the Islamic world" (Corporate Counsel Business Journal, 2011). In fact, US President Barack Obama directly praised Indonesia's role which was considered successful in facilitating dialogue between the West and the global Muslim community (O'Loughlin, 2010).

The consistency of the message and policy direction based on a moral, historical, and ideological framework further emphasizes the "psycho-milieu Thinker-Type" character in SBY's leadership. With a mindset that tends to be reflective and considers the dimensions of values and identity, and surrounded by diplomats and officials who articulate a similar vision, Indonesia's foreign policy in the SBY era is a reflection of a combination of strategic interests and ideological drives to strengthen Indonesia's image as a constructive democratic Muslim country in the international arena.

Second, a complex and multidimensional mindset (high conceptual complexity) refers to a mindset that is able to see, understand, and evaluate issues or situations from various different perspectives in depth and not simplify them in a dichotomous framework. In the context of foreign leadership, this characteristic is reflected in a leader's ability to consider various interacting variables, including domestic dynamics, regional pressures, and global expectations, in formulating foreign policy.

Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY), as a leader with a military background and education in a Western country, is known to have a complex and

multidimensional thinking style. This thinking style is clearly visible in his foreign policy design which is not simple and linear, but rather simultaneously takes into account various interrelated factors and interests (Anwar, 2014; Sukma, 2011; Vermonte, 2014). His "a thousand friends, no enemies" approach reflects an effort to reconcile Indonesia's national interests with the complex structure of international relations, as well as avoid actions that could disrupt the international world order (Piccone & Yusman, 2014). Thus, SBY's leadership style reflects a high level of conceptual complexity, which allows Indonesia to play a constructive and adaptive diplomatic role in a dynamic global environment.

This policy is manifested in Indonesia's active involvement in various multilateral forums such as the G20, Bali Democracy Forum, and other global initiatives such as the Interfaith Dialogue and Alliance of Civilizations. Indonesia's participation in these forums shows SBY's strategic efforts to position Indonesia as a moderate democratic country in the midst of global competition. Indonesia's non-aligned approach to geopolitical issues, such as the South China Sea conflict, also demonstrates caution and the ability to consider domestic interests, regional pressures, and global expectations simultaneously (detiknews, 2005; Fionna et al., 2018; Shekhar, 2016).

Furthermore, humanitarian diplomacy was developed by SBY, such as involvement in reconciliation with Timor Leste. From 2005 to 2008, Indonesia and Timor-Leste established the Comissão Verdade e Amizade (CVA), commonly known as the Indonesia Commission on Truth and Friendship, to investigate human rights violations leading up to Timor-Leste's independence. The commission's report, submitted on July 15, 2008, explicitly mentioned human rights violations that had involved the military and apparatus. For that reason, this reconciliation also urged moral recognition and institutional reform. This agenda was strongly supported directly by President SBY (Hayner, 2010; Strating, 2014). Mietzner (2009) further emphasizes that SBY has a strong interest in global issues, supported by a broad international network and diplomatic skills that were appreciated early in his leadership. This is reflected, for example, in Indonesia's active role in international forums such as ASEAN and the United Nations, as well as relations with countries such as Australia. This active interest and involvement shows that SBY does not view Indonesia's position in the world narrowly, but rather within the framework of a broader structure of international relations.

Then another example is, how SBY's attitude in responding to the Iranian nuclear issue in the UN Security Council shows a tendency to think complexly and consider various dimensions. Rather than automatically following the demands of Western countries, SBY tried to balance Indonesia's position by upholding the principle of free and active foreign policy, while accommodating domestic sentiments, such as parliament's rejection of support for sanctions against Iran. The ability to simultaneously consider domestic dynamics, regional sensitivity, and international pressure reflects a high level of complexity of thinking (Ministry of State Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2007a).

This complexity of thinking is empirically reflected in Indonesia's voting behavior on two UN Security Council resolutions on the Iranian nuclear issue. In 2007, Indonesia supported Resolution 1747 imposing sanctions on Iran, but the following year, Indonesia abstained from voting on Resolution 1803 imposing additional sanctions (Arms Control Association, 2025). This shift reflects an adjustment in foreign policy in response to increasing domestic pressure. A national survey showed that more than 50% of respondents disagreed with Indonesia's support for sanctions, with the highest level of disapproval coming from Muslims and supporters of parties in the governing coalition. Large Islamic mass organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah also openly criticized the government's decision, arguing that it did not reflect solidarity with the Islamic world and was too submissive to pressure from Western countries (Gindarsah, 2012, p. 428).

In addition, political tensions within the governing coalition also worsened the situation. President Yudhoyono's cabinet reshuffle in 2007 caused disappointment among coalition parties, especially the Golkar Party. This prompted a number of parliamentarians to exercise their right of interpellation against the President's foreign policy decisions (Gindarsah, 2012, p. 427). This parliamentary challenge reflected a significant institutional shift, in which the legislature began to play a more active role in foreign policy matters. Facing declining public satisfaction and the risk of losing coalition support ahead of the 2009 election, the President's decision to abstain from voting on Resolution 1803 can be understood as a strategic compromise, an attempt to balance Indonesia's international responsibilities with domestic political realities (Jakarta Post, 2008). Thus, SBY's foreign policy maneuvers on the Iranian nuclear issue are a clear example of complex leadership thinking, in which the demands of global

diplomacy and domestic legitimacy are carried out simultaneously with measured pragmatism.

Thus, these various indicators can be interpreted as manifestations of high conceptual complexity in SBY's leadership. Although the implementation of this complex way of thinking does not always result in effective or impactful policies, the non-linear mindset and tendency to consider various variables in decision-making still show the characteristics of a leader with a high level of conceptual complexity. Therefore, it can be said that in the aspect of formulating foreign policy, SBY shows the capacity to think multidimensionally, as is the main characteristic of a leader with high conceptual complexity.

The third indicator emphasizes long-term normative goals. This orientation refers to a leader's tendency to formulate foreign policy based on moral values, international norms, and long-term visions that are ideological in nature, rather than pursuing concrete and immediate results. Leaders with this type generally prioritize ethical and normative rhetoric in decision-making. This can be seen from the way SBY understands the international situation, and often shows a reflective, careful, and non-impulsive decision-making process. SBY's decision-making process also tends to carefully consider universal values such as peace, justice, and regional stability, while maintaining a balance between domestic aspirations and Indonesia's international image.

In the South China Sea issue, for example, SBY rejected a confrontational approach and chose to emphasize the principles of peace, dialogue, and the central role of ASEAN as a conflict resolution mechanism. Indonesia did not explicitly take sides in the dispute, but instead played a role as a mediator and guardian of regional stability. This approach was clearly illustrated in peaceful diplomacy efforts through strengthening the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and advocating for the establishment of a more binding Code of Conduct. When regional tensions escalated in 2012, Indonesia, under SBY's leadership, sent Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa to conduct shuttle diplomacy to maintain ASEAN unity and cohesion (Fionna et al., 2018). This approach is not aimed at achieving short-term strategic gains, but reflects Indonesia's long-term vision as a norm entrepreneur in creating a peaceful and stable region through multilateral diplomacy and respect for the norm of non-intervention.

The consistency of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's (SBY)

rhetoric in various speeches at the UN General Assembly and other multilateral forums shows his leadership orientation which is very thick with this principle. Expressions such as "Diplomacy must be based not on the logic of power, but the power of ideas, of values, and of cooperation" reflect not just normative expressions, but part of a grand narrative that positions Indonesia as a moral force among developing countries (VOA Indonesia, 2014).

Then another case example is SBY's decision to support the democratization process in Myanmar. In this context, SBY prioritizes the inclusive dialogue method to help the political transition process in Myanmar. SBY's decision to encourage democratization in Myanmar cannot be separated from Indonesia's foreign policy agenda which wants to promote democratic values in the ASEAN region (Fionna et al., 2018, pp. 39-40; Natalegawa, 2018, pp. 16-17).

Indonesia's experience of being under an authoritarian regime, as well as its success in consolidating democracy, is considered to provide moral legitimacy for Indonesia to play a role as a bridge-builder in helping Myanmar undergo a political transition. In addition, SBY's steps are also part of an effort to answer the expectations of the international community that encourages Indonesia to be more actively involved in the democratization process in Myanmar (Karim, 2017). Even as late as 2008, the United Nations under the leadership of Ban Ki Moon directly asked SBY to communicate with Myanmar's leaders and monitor the development of the democratization process in the country (Ministry of State Secretariat, 2007a).

Unlike the US and international NGOs that push for Myanmar's democratization through sanctions and international isolation (hard power), SBY prioritizes a bridge-builder strategy by building constructive and inclusive dialogue without pressure. The difficulty of Myanmar's democratization process is inseparable from the absence of democratic mechanisms in its regional structure. Although Indonesia has formed the ASEAN Political- Security Community and BDF, initiatives to promote democracy, in reality they have not been effective enough to help Myanmar in the democratization process (Ciorciari, 2018, pp. 47-49). Because these forums do not have special mechanisms or legal powers to uphold democratic values and human rights. The Western approach that tends to use the strategy of "naming and shaming" has caused the Myanmar military regime to increasingly distrust the international community, and more suspicious of international assistance (Aryani, 2019). Since 2004, SBY has rhetorically

defended Myanmar from international pressure when Western countries highlighted human rights violations. SBY's actions indicate a very careful character, and more conciliatory in this case, because he does not want to label any country an enemy. Even so, SBY continues to encourage Myanmar to show concrete progress in the democratization process and asks Western countries to be patient (Ciorciari, 2018; Fionna et al., 2018; M. M. Natalegawa, 2018).

SBY's decision to use quiet diplomacy rather than megaphone diplomacy is considered more effective because this instrument prioritizes persuasive strategies and not forcing Myanmar to move towards democracy. According to (S. S. Tan, 2013) this persuasive approach is more effective in building constructive relations with Myanmar. SBY has also actively sent personal letters to Myanmar's military leaders to ask about the development of democracy that has been achieved by the Myanmar regime. To build more comfortable and open communication, SBY also sent Agus Widjojo as a former reformist general as a special envoy to Myanmar (Dianti, 2023). SBY, a former general, realizes that the democratization process should not disrupt national stability and integrity. Indonesia's experience when it almost broke up during the reform transition period became SBY's experience that democracy does not happen instantly and requires a gradual process (Yudhoyono, 2010).

As a result of this approach, Myanmar has considered Indonesia as a close friendly country that has contributed constructively to the process of strengthening democracy in its country. After the murder of the Rohingya Muslim minority, Myanmar was criticized by many in the international community, but Indonesia offered more assistance and direct involvement in resolving this conflict without any criticism (Setiawan & Hamka, 2020). As an initial step, Indonesia provided humanitarian assistance in the form of basic necessities amounting to 1 million US dollars. This assistance was intended by Indonesia to show good faith in helping to resolve the Rohingya conflict involving human rights violations (Waluyo, 2013).

With good faith, Indonesia became the only country allowed to send a delegation by the Myanmar military regime to see firsthand the conditions on the ground (Azis et al., 2023a). In addition, with its normative and inclusive approach, Indonesia also bridged the relationship between Myanmar and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The OIC is known to be quite tough in asking questions about human rights violations in Myanmar, so Myanmar has

little trust in this organization (Organization of Islamic Cooperation, 2017; Smith & Williams, 2021).

Myanmar's distrust of outsiders makes it difficult for the international community such as the UN and OIC to have a dialogue and see firsthand the conflict that is occurring on the ground. In this case, Indonesia tried to convince Myanmar to accept the organization's proposal for dialogue and agree to send their delegation to the field. Thanks to Indonesia's efforts so far in building trust, Myanmar finally agreed to the proposal. Indonesia's normative diplomacy achievement received high appreciation from the international community, and they hope that Indonesia can continue its role as a bridge-builder in resolving the Rohingya issue constructively (Aryani, 2019; Karim, 2017).

Indonesia's achievements in helping the democratization process in Myanmar were followed by the issuance of the Law on Press Freedom. Although the democratization process did not take place quickly, the political changes that occurred in Myanmar showed progress that should be appreciated (Azis et al., 2023b). Press freedom, which is one of the main pillars of democracy, is an important element of the political transition in Myanmar. Indonesia, which previously had the same problem regarding press freedom, became a reference for the Myanmar government to draft a press freedom law (Radio Free Asia, 2021). Press Law No. 40 of 1999 and Broadcasting Law No. 32 of 2002 were largely adopted by the Myanmar government in their Press Law. This shows that Indonesia not only shares experiences but also becomes a legislative model in media reform in Myanmar (Karim, 2017).

SBY's efforts in promoting democracy have received great appreciation from various groups, both the international community and from Myanmar itself (antaranews.com, 2013; Radio Free Asia, 2021). Even US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton directly appreciated SBY's efforts in supporting reform and the democratization process in Myanmar. This achievement makes Indonesia considered as a democracy promoter country that is active in promoting peace values in the region (Cipto, 2012).

SBY's involvement in promoting democratization and human rights reflects his normative leadership style. As a normative leader, SBY shows a high commitment to ethical values and universal moral principles, especially in terms of democratic, accountable and human rights-oriented governance. This commitment is reflected in the initiative to establish APSC, BDF and also

Indonesia's constructive involvement in the conflict in Myanmar (Dermawan et al., 2019). SBY's efforts are aimed not only at advancing democracy through inclusive dialogue, but also at making Indonesia a normative model in the democratization process. In this regard, SBY actively promotes standards of political behavior based on openness, public participation, and respect for democratic principles as part of the moral responsibility of leadership (Alexandra & Basuki, 2024).

Indonesia's overall foreign policy under SBY's leadership shows a consistent orientation of emphasizing long-term normative goals, namely the tendency to formulate foreign policy based on moral values, international norms, and long-term ideological visions. Rather than pursuing short-term strategic gains, SBY consistently prioritizes the principles of peace, inclusiveness, and respect for international norms in various issues, ranging from the South China Sea conflict to the democratization process in Myanmar.

Through this normative approach, Indonesia not only plays a role as a mediator that maintains regional stability, but also as a bridge builder that facilitates the political transition in Myanmar without using pressure or confrontation. Indonesia's experience in consolidating democracy, as well as SBY's commitment to ethical values, encourage Indonesia's active role in promoting democracy in the ASEAN region constructively. Policies such as quiet diplomacy, sending special envoys, and supporting reforms in Myanmar are a real reflection of how SBY views diplomacy as a long-term instrument to build a peaceful, stable, and democratic region.

Thus, SBY's foreign approach is not merely a response to short-term dynamics, but rather part of a long-term vision that positions Indonesia as a normative power in Southeast Asia, as well as an actor that promotes universal values in the international order.

#### **4.5. SBY's SSC Normative Narrative for Africa**

SBY with a normative leadership style, context-driven leadership orientation, and thinker-type psycho-milieu tend to produce foreign policy narratives based on values and norms. The narrative of south-south cooperation is used as a strategic instrument to strengthen the solidarity of developing countries, as well as a forum for Indonesia to expand its normative influence. The African region is important for strengthening relations between global south countries,

where Indonesia appears as a democratic country that promotes moral values. At the 2007 UN Security Council Summit, SBY specifically highlighted the issue of peace and security in Africa. In his speech, SBY emphasized three main principles: First, the importance of clarity of national jurisdiction to prevent conflict between groups of states, the importance of preventing rather than healing conflict, and the need to increase cooperation between the UN and African regional organizations (Detiknews, 2007). These three principles reflect SBY's normative approach that emphasizes solutions based on universal values such as stability, collective cooperation, and development.

This was evident from the Asia-Africa Conference on 22–23 April 2005, where Indonesia (SBY) and South Africa (Thabo Mbeki) co-hosted the 50th anniversary of the Asia-Africa Conference (AAC) in Bandung. The narrative of the “Bandung Spirit” in fighting colonialism and the narrative of Global South solidarity are still the main themes in this forum, especially for the issue of Palestine which is not yet independent (Ciorciari, 2012; Natalegawa, 2018). Palestine is considered a concrete example of a nation that has not yet received its right to independence, and the Asia-Africa Conference encouraged its member states to support the Palestinian struggle. This makes the Palestinian issue a collective issue for countries in the Asian and African continents. The SSC framework, born from the Bandung Spirit, includes the principles of solidarity, not interfering in the internal affairs of other countries, and respecting the sovereignty of other nations; therefore, Israel's colonization of Palestinian land is not justified. SBY tends to narrate the SSC as a form of solidarity between global south countries that fight for global justice and a more equal international order, in accordance with what was dreamed of at the 1955 Bandung Conference.

SBY's normative leadership directs the SSC narrative in Africa for the common interest and the spread of universal values. This is also reflected in his speech at the 2005 Asia-Africa Conference which stated:

“in the past we gathered to fight for independence it is about justice and now we are facing same challenge it is about global justice that is porverty and underdevelopment” (CSIS Indonesia, 2025).

To implement the results of the 2005 Asia-Africa Conference, as an initial step, 91 heads of state/government and their representatives have signed the Declaration on the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership (NAASP) (State

Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2005). The partnership between the two continents is aimed at building cooperation in three areas of partnership, namely political solidarity, economic cooperation, and socio-cultural relations. SBY's leadership in this forum shows a strong commitment to global issues that touch on the common interests of the two continents, such as poverty alleviation, gender equality, combating infectious diseases, education, and improving the quality of human resources. By encouraging reform of multilateral institutions and fighting for fair market access, SBY articulates the global agenda from the perspective of global south countries that prioritize inclusivity and collective responsibility (Alatas, 2005; Bandoro, 2005).

Moreover, attention to the impact of natural disasters, such as the earthquake and tsunami of December 26, 2004, also reflects leadership based on the values of human solidarity. Through the Joint Asian-African Leaders' Statement on Natural Disasters, SBY initiated cross-regional cooperation in disaster mitigation, emergency response, and the establishment of an early warning system, strengthening the paradigm that human security is the foundation of global peace (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2024).

Thus, the Asian-African Conference under SBY's leadership is not only a diplomatic forum but a platform for the dissemination of global normative values where solidarity, justice, and humanity are used as shared guidelines in building a more peaceful, inclusive, and civilized world. SBY's approach tends to be inseparable from the fact that in the early 2000s, there was a narrative that developed in Indonesia and South Africa after apartheid, where the Asian-African continent was known as a weak and poor continent. According to Bandoro, the narrative of these two continents is often associated with liberal economic reforms imposed by developed countries, resulting in a dependency relationship between developed countries and the Global South countries. Asian-African countries tend not to have a voice or decision-making capacity in the international system (Bandoro, 2005).

Compared to Indonesia which is still fighting for solidarity and the values of Bandung Spirit, East Asian countries such as China, Japan and Korea have focused on the agenda of strategic market penetration in Africa to seek resources, markets and investment opportunities. For example, the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2000, the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) in 1993, and the South Korea-Africa Forum in 2006

(Dorigné-Thomson, 2023). Although these East Asian countries prioritize a pragmatic and more concrete approach, SBY seems to prefer an ideational solidarity narrative in narrating the SSC in Africa by reviving the romanticism of the Asia Africa Conference.

SBY's preference for a normative multilateralism approach is reflected in Indonesia's initiative towards the Asia-Africa partnership through NAASP. Under SBY's leadership, Indonesia pushed for the establishment of NAASP as an effort to rebuild solidarity among Global South countries with the spirit of the 1955 Asia Africa Conference, while strengthening the collective voice of Asia and Africa in facing global inequality. This approach is in line with SBY's diplomatic character which is oriented towards the principles of a rules-based world order, global justice, and inclusive cooperation. SBY hopes that NAASP will be able to unite existing Asia-Africa cooperation initiatives such as FOCAC, TICAD and other multilateral forums into one multilateral coordination that is equal and not dominated by a great power (Dorigné-Thomson, 2023).

SBY's hope of making the NAASP a strategic bridge between Asia and Africa has been hampered by structural issues. The FOCAC forum coordination within the NAASP framework is considered unrealistic because FOCAC is a hierarchical foreign policy instrument oriented toward China's national interests (Alatas, 2005). SBY's normative multilateral vision is hampered by the reluctance of major East Asian powers to submit to egalitarian coordination. The NAASP faces various obstacles such as a lack of political commitment, a lack of political and material support from Asian countries, and the absence of formal institutions. Differences in foreign policy priorities and political ideologies among member states also complicate the institutionalization of the NAASP as a framework for intercontinental cooperation. Furthermore, the lack of integration of the NAASP into the African Union's multilateral cooperation framework is also a major obstacle (Dlamini, 2019).

Despite being faced with the fact that NAASP has begun to be marginalized because it is considered not to have provided concrete results like the FOCAC forum, SBY still believes that NAASP can strengthen the historical relationship between the Asia-Africa continent and thus provide strong moral legitimacy. The results of Dorigné-Thomson's interview with Former Indonesian Foreign Minister Dr. Hassan Wirajuda on April 17, 2018, Jakarta, Pusdiklat, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, 2018, emphasized that the ideological

relationship between Asia and Africa that has been built since 1955 is still strong and meaningful to this day (Dorigné-Thomson, 2023, p. 134). SBY's normative leadership style perceives NAASP as rhetoric and a symbol of solidarity between Asian- African countries, so that its implementation process is very limited. Dlamini (2019) suggested that ASEAN take a more active role in facilitating functional coordination between existing Asia-Africa platforms, because in fact, ASEAN-Africa itself has great trade potential, it is recorded that this cooperative relationship has grown from \$ 2.8 billion in 1990 to \$ 42.5 billion in 2012 but not within the NAASP framework (Dlamini, 2019).

As Chairman of the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), the 6th President of the Republic of Indonesia Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) also played a role in the series of commemorations of the 2015 Asia-Africa Conference in Jakarta. In his capacity, SBY was a speaker at the Asia-Africa Parliamentary Conference held at the Parliament Complex, Senayan. In the forum, SBY specifically voiced the importance of peace and security as a prerequisite for sustainable development in the Asia and Africa regions. SBY asked that Asian African countries avoid conflict between countries and spread the values of peace as widely as possible. Then SBY highlighted the conflicts in Africa that had ended, such as the civil war between Angola and Mozambique and also the ethnic war in Rwanda. SBY emphasized: "This stability must continue to be expanded. We must end the conflict in Syria and reconcile Yemen. The spread of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) must also be suppressed" (Stefanie, 2015). By emphasizing the importance of the values of peace, reconciliation and cooperation between developing countries as the foundation of relations between Asia and Africa, SBY reflects a normative leadership style. Then SBY also gave an example of Indonesia's relationship with Timor Leste which has now made peace, even though their history is filled with conflict.

SBY showed that Indonesia's experience in managing conflict can be a moral model for other countries in the Global South, including in Africa. SBY also emphasized that major challenges such as poverty can only be overcome if conditions are peaceful, because conflict will only hinder the development process. The speech delivered by SBY reflects a moral leader who fights for universal norms, such as peace and global solidarity. This type of leadership style tends to make the SSC narrative not just a strategic project, but also an ethical and humanitarian project, where Indonesia positions itself as a bridge connecting Asia

and Africa. In March 2008, SBY visited the African continent for the first time, visiting Senegal and South Africa as part of a series of overseas working visits that included Iran and the United Arab Emirates. Although there were economic issues discussed, the main purpose of SBY's visit to Africa tended to be aimed at global normative issues and not bilateral economic interests. For example, SBY's visit to Dakar Senegal was to participate in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Summit. In this forum, Indonesia discussed issues concerning the Middle East conflict and strengthening the welfare of Muslims through cooperation with the Islamic Development Bank (IDB). This approach can be understood as a form of SBY's leadership orientation that positions Indonesia-Africa as a form of global solidarity that tends to be oriented towards values and not merely pragmatic transactions (Detiknews, 2008).

Furthermore, during a state visit to South Africa, discussions between SBY and the South African President were more directed at diplomatic coordination efforts as fellow non-permanent members of the UN Security Council in responding to the Iranian nuclear crisis (Detiknews, 2008). This shows that the SSC narrative is understood as an instrument for Indonesia to contribute to a more just and stable global order, while building an image as a democratic country that is active in multilateralism.

President SBY's visit to Liberia in 2013 in his capacity as the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post 2015 Development Agenda (Antaraneews.com, 2013), demonstrated a normative leadership character. During the visit, SBY was not only involved in a bilateral meeting with Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, but also put forward universal themes such as poverty alleviation, sustainable development, and democracy. SBY's active participation in multilateral forums, such as the high-level panel established by the UN Secretary General, as well as SBY's efforts in promoting the inclusiveness of the global development agenda for developing countries, show SBY's efforts in narrating the SSC in Africa to spread democratic values in the global order (Detiknews, 2013).

In February 2013, SBY attended the 12th OIC Summit in Egypt, which discussed important issues such as the Syrian crisis, Palestine, the Rohingya, Islamophobia, and the Mali crisis (GatewayHouse, 2013; OIC, 2013). This visit reflected Indonesia's commitment to solidarity with the Islamic world. Egypt was seen as a strategic partner in advancing democracy, human rights, and good

governance. The narrative of the OIC during the SBY era demonstrated a normative approach emphasizing the values of democracy and peace, in contrast to Jokowi's pragmatic approach, which focused on concrete economic outcomes. In 2011, SBY also hosted the commemoration of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and called for an active role in shaping a just and democratic world order (Ramadhan & Muhammad, 2011). However, Ciorciari considered SBY's vision too general and lacking focus, making it difficult for Indonesia to demonstrate concrete leadership amidst the diverse interests of NAM members (Ciorciari, 2018; Hermawan & Habir, 2015). During a visit to South Africa, discussions focused primarily on diplomatic coordination regarding the Iranian nuclear crisis as fellow non-permanent members of the UNSC (Detiknews, 2008). This demonstrates that the SSC is seen as Indonesia's contribution to creating a just and stable global order and building its image as a democratic nation active in multilateral forums.

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In February 2013, SBY visited Egypt for the 12th Summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. With the theme "The Muslim World: New Challenges and Expanding Opportunities," the conference focused on discussing important issues related to the Syrian crisis, the situation in Palestine, the Rohingya community in Myanmar, the issue of Islamophobia, and the crisis in Mali (GatewayHouse, 2013; OIC, 2013). SBY's visit can reflect Indonesia's commitment to the solidarity of the Islamic world. Egypt, located in North Africa, is seen as a strategic partner to promote democratic values, human rights and good governance.

Thus, in the context of SBY's leadership, the SSC narrative tends to

prioritize a normative approach that upholds the values of democracy and peace. This approach contrasts with President Joko Widodo's leadership style which is more pragmatic and oriented towards concrete economic results. This difference strengthens the argument that variations in Indonesia's SSC narrative towards Africa are greatly influenced by the president's leadership style.

In 2011, SBY hosted the commemoration of the Non-Aligned Movement in Jakarta (Ramadhan & Muhammad, 2011). He explained that in the 21st century, NAM must be more proactive in shaping a new world. With a vision of fighting for peace, justice, and prosperity, NAM can promote democracy and good governance. However, according to Ciorciari, the goals conveyed by SBY are too general and unfocused. As a result, it is difficult for Indonesia to show its real leadership on certain issues in the NAM organization which has diverse ideologies and fragmented interests between its member countries (Ciorciari, 2018; Hermawan & Habir, 2015).

#### **4.6. President Jokowi's Pragmatic Leadership Style**

This study shows that under President Jokowi, Indonesia has framed its South-South Cooperation (SSC) in Africa as a pragmatic, economy-driven partnership aimed at delivering concrete results and generating domestic economic benefits. Based on actor-specific theory, this variation is explained by the leadership style, leadership orientation, and psycho-milieu of the head of state. Jokowi's pragmatic leadership style, goal-driven orientation, and doer-type psycho-milieu have shaped Indonesia's foreign policy narrative to be more outcome-oriented and focused on tangible national gains. Jokowi's pragmatic approach encourages Indonesia to prioritize its economic diplomacy agenda in the SSC narrative in Africa. In the National Medium-Term Development Plan 2015–2019 and 2020–2024, Jokowi clearly maximizes economic diplomacy for concrete benefits for the national economy, with a selective free trade or economic partnership scheme (National Development Planning Agency, 2015, 2020).

By definition, the concept of Jokowi's pragmatic leadership style refers to a type of leadership that is oriented towards concrete results and real benefits for domestic interests (Connelly, 2014a; Shekhar, 2018; Weatherbee, 2016). To conceptualize this type of pragmatic leadership, this study uses three main indicators. First, commitment to achieving concrete results such as economic growth and infrastructure development. Second, a preference for a simpler and

more pragmatic bilateral approach compared to complex multilateral engagement. Third, a relatively low level of interest in building an international image. Leaders with these characteristics tend to avoid a high diplomatic profile and prioritize instrumental foreign policies to promote domestic economic interests rather than spreading normative values or principles.

Jokowi's pragmatic leadership style cannot be separated from his life experience as a businessman. Born to a village head Noto Mihardjo and his mother Sujiatmi from a family of wood traders, Jokowi grew up in a simple family and spent his childhood on the banks of the river. This makes Jokowi very sensitive to issues of poverty and makes him a low-profile person. Jokowi completed his elementary school education at Tirtoyoso 03 State Elementary School, then continued his high school education at State Junior High School 1 and continued his high school education at Surakarta 6 State Senior High School. Jokowi continued his bachelor's degree education at Gadjah Mada University by majoring in wood technology at the Faculty of Forestry. Graduated in 1985, Jokowi submitted a thesis entitled "Study of Plywood Consumption Patterns in End Use in Surakarta City." In 1988, Jokowi started building his own business by establishing CV. Rakabu (Prasodjo, 2020).

After doing business in the furniture sector for approximately 23 years, Jokowi began his political career in 1998 by joining the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) led by Megawati Soekarnoputri. PDI-P became Jokowi's political vehicle to compete to become mayor of Solo and president of the Republic of Indonesia. After serving as mayor of Solo, Jokowi continued his political career as Governor of DKI Jakarta and then became President. During his tenure as mayor, governor and president, Jokowi's assertive-pragmatic leadership style has been demonstrated in his various policies. Starting from developing his business, Jokowi emphasized the values of efficiency in his bureaucracy. When he was mayor of Solo, Jokowi was famous for his blusukan actions, bureaucratic efficiency, and non-confrontational strategies that reflected the Javanese cultural values of "nguwongke uwong" (humanizing humans) and "juwing kaula gusti" (the unity of the leader and the people) (Agastia, 2021; Prasodjo, 2020).

The first indicator of pragmatic leadership style is the tendency of leaders to prioritize economic diplomacy as the main instrument in supporting the national development agenda, especially infrastructure. In this context, President

Jokowi's leadership reflects this pattern. According to Mietzner (2015), at the domestic level, Jokowi's leadership style can be categorized as moderate populism, in contrast to his political opponent, Prabowo Subianto, who tends to use a traditional populist style with strong anti-foreign rhetoric. In contrast, Jokowi avoids such rhetoric because he does not want to sell unrealistic utopian promises. This attitude shows Jokowi's pragmatism in leadership, where policies are not built on the basis of populist rhetoric alone, but are directed to achieve concrete results that can be felt directly by the community (Mietzner, 2015). Mietzner's argument is strengthened by Warburton's findings (2016) which show that Jokowi's leadership is pragmatic and pro-poor, with a renewed commitment to the state ideology (statist) and economic nationalism. This pragmatic and nationalist approach is rooted in Indonesia's past, and bears similarities to the technocratic development patterns of the New Order era. Warburton notes that statist and nationalist characters have been integral to Indonesia's economic planning. However, the combination of Jokowi's personal agenda and his leadership style has given rise to a more modest version of the development model, focusing on concrete projects such as infrastructure (Warburton, 2016).

The concept of the developmental state, which was originally used to explain the economic growth patterns of post-World War II East Asian countries such as Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea (Woo-Cumings, 2019), does indicate a major role for the state in intervening in the economy and building an efficient bureaucracy to encourage rapid industrialization. However, Warburton does not fully use the term to describe Indonesia, because the bureaucratic efficiency that is characteristic of the developmental state has not been fully seen in Indonesia.

Nevertheless, Jokowi's preference for economic diplomacy and focus on infrastructure development show how the pragmatism of his leadership is translated not only into domestic policy but also into foreign policy orientation. This is proven by the appointment of 12 ministers and heads of institutions as "focal points" of economic diplomacy to oversee foreign investment and accelerate economic agreements (Weatherbee, 2016, pp. 41–43). Economic diplomacy is positioned as an instrument to accelerate national development, in line with the goal-driven and pragmatic characteristics inherent in Jokowi's leadership style.

Jokowi's commitment to focusing his developmentalism agenda includes various narrow but pragmatic economic policies. The characteristics of Jokowi's

new developmentalism as explained by Warburton (2016): First, Jokowi's new developmentalism is characterized by his reluctance to handle politically sensitive issues, such as legal reform, corruption and good governance. According to President Jokowi, institutional problems like this are considered less important, compared to urgent goals such as rapid economic development. In this context, Jokowi considers that pursuing a reform agenda has the potential to threaten the political stability that he has worked so hard to achieve. Second, Jokowi shows a less progressive attitude on the issue of human rights and justice. This is shown in how Jokowi does not prioritize civil and political rights or historical justice. Although Jokowi does not revive the repressive regime style of the New Order, his new developmentalism shows a lack of concern for human rights issues (Warburton, 2016).

Jokowi's goal to improve infrastructure rapidly can be seen from Jokowi's ambitious targets. The infrastructure program includes providing 35,000 megawatts of electricity for the national grid, improving and developing five main ports and 19 supporting ports, building 3,650 kilometers of new roads, and achieving 100% access to clean water nationally. This development agenda is estimated to cost more than \$411 billion, half of which is taken from the state budget (Rahadiana & Suhartono, 2016).

Jokowi's development agenda is also one of the factors why State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) during Jokowi's era received a significant boost. Collaboration between the SOEs Minister and Jokowi created greater access to capital. It is recorded that the government allocated additional funds of 3 billion USD to BUMN in 2015. In addition to this, Jokowi also began to increase the efficiency of this sector by establishing a holding company for SOEs, so that SOEs have a greater capacity to attract capital and become the locomotive of Indonesia's development (Warburton, 2016).

Jokowi, who focuses on domestic development, believes that the state must control imports and exports and encourage the development of local industries. This has led to the view that imports or dependence on foreign goods will weaken domestic productivity and also the prospects for long-term industrialization (Dorigné-Thomson, 2023, p. 42). This has led to restrictions on various imported goods entering Indonesia, such as agricultural products, food, livestock, and smartphone components. One example of an import restriction policy is the beef import permit which is only given to companies that can

demonstrate a commitment to breeding local cattle, so that local cattle breeders can increase their industrial capacity and reduce dependence on imported products (VOA Indonesia, 2016). Then Jokowi's efforts in banning the export of raw nickel and encouraging the construction of domestic smelters have produced significant benefits. It is proven that Jokowi's efforts have succeeded in attracting foreign investment, especially China, in large numbers. It is recorded that the results of nickel exports that have been processed into steel have jumped significantly from only 3.3 billion US dollars throughout 2017-2018 to 20.9 billion dollars in 2021, and reaching 33.8 billion dollars in 2022 (Junida, 2023).

**Figure 4.1 Export Volume of Iron & Steel, and Ferro-Nickel Indonesia Period 2018- 2023 (Million Tons)**



Source: (Kementerian Perdagangan RI., 2023)

Although this policy has drawn protests from the WTO and Western countries, especially the European Union, which oppose the ban on raw nickel exports, Indonesia continues with it. The government even plans to implement a similar strategy for other commodities such as bauxite, copper, gold, coal, and seaweed, as part of an effort to create a more favorable trade balance and push Indonesia towards developed country status. (Lestari, 2024; R. S. Putri, 2023). These dynamics of Jokowi's domestic policies show that he is a nationalist who focuses on the agenda of accelerating infrastructure development and national economic growth.

The second indicator of a pragmatic leadership style is the tendency to be

more active in building bilateral relations that are practical and provide direct benefits for national interests. This pattern is clearly seen in President Jokowi's foreign policy, where bilateral relations are prioritized over multilateral engagement, which tends to be normative and complex (Shekhar, 2018). Jokowi's administration has shown less appetite for multilateralism both globally and regionally. Jokowi viewed that bilateral interest-driven relations are easier to control and quickly generate benefits, such as trade, investment, and infrastructure cooperation. Jokowi prioritizes relations with major powers such as China, the US, and Japan rather than strengthening Indonesia's position in regional forums such as ASEAN and APEC (Shekhar, 2018, pp. 17–18; Weatherbee, 2016, p. 4).

Jokowi's tendency to focus on bilateral relations is evident in how he views ASEAN. Although Retno Marsudi, as his foreign minister, still views ASEAN as a "cornerstone," meaning moving from the center and then expanding to the international world, Jokowi does not seem to prioritize this multilateral ASEAN approach. During SBY's era, his foreign ministers, such as Hassan Wirajuda and Marty Natalegawa, were active in ASEAN affairs and even often led Indonesian diplomacy when Indonesia served as ASEAN chair in 2002 and 2011 (M. Natalegawa, 2015), Jokowi preferred to delegate multilateral meetings to his vice president Jusuf Kalla (Weatherbee, 2016, p. 46).

To realize his international economic agenda, President Jokowi is pushing for the strengthening of bilateral strategic partnerships, namely formal cooperation between countries in the fields of trade, investment, and technology. For Jokowi, these partnerships provide a gateway to accessing resources to support domestic economic and social development (Weatherbee, 2016, p. 43). Jokowi's leadership style tends to prioritize bilateral relations with key Asian countries over multilateral forums, as they are considered more effective in driving economic growth, attracting foreign investment, and boosting the tourism sector.

One example is the bilateral relationship with China, which has become a strategic pillar of development during the Jokowi era (antaranews.com, 2023). When combined with Hong Kong, China is Indonesia's second-largest source of FDI (27.7%), overtaking Japan (9.2%) (Llyods Bank, 2023). Indonesia's participation in Chinese initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) also provides access to financing for Jokowi's priority infrastructure projects, such as ports, railways, and

industrial areas (antaranews.com, 2023; Anwar, 2019, p. 73; Puspaningtyas, 2023).

To avoid the perception of dependence on China, the Jokowi administration also sought to diversify bilateral relations with other partners, such as India (Aufiya, 2022). However, the opportunity to find new strategic partners with direct economic benefits was quite limited, as Indonesia already had partnerships with major countries such as China, the US, South Korea, Japan, India, and Australia (Weatherbee, 2016).

In this context, Indonesia's multilateral diplomacy during the Jokowi era (2014–2019) exhibited a paradoxical tendency. Although active in forums such as the G20, APEC, and the EAS, these forums were primarily used to strengthen bilateral relationships deemed more concrete for the national development agenda. On the sidelines of the G20 Summit, for example, Jokowi regularly held bilateral meetings with partners such as Australia, China, Germany, India, and Saudi Arabia. A similar pattern is seen in APEC and the EAS, where bilateral meetings have become a key part of Jokowi's diplomatic agenda (Antaranews.com, 2017; Rosyidin & Kusumawardhana, 2022; Rosyidin & Pattipeilohy, 2020). This suggests that bilateral approaches remain prioritized because they are considered more effective in supporting domestic interests than multilateral forums, which are more normative and offer less direct benefits (Liputan6.com, 2018; Office of the Assistant to the Deputy Cabinet Secretary for State Documents & Translation, 2022).

Although Indonesia under Jokowi remains active in these forums, the orientation of foreign policy emphasizes a bilateral approach, which is considered more practical and provides direct benefits. Indonesia's participation in multilateral forums is not directed at forming or strengthening global norms, but rather is seen as a pragmatic means to pursue short-term interests. In this case, multilateral forums are used more to open up opportunities for more concrete bilateral cooperation with countries that are considered potential. Thus, multilateral forums are seen not as normative arenas, but as instruments to support domestic interests and expand bilateral economic cooperation channels (Qin, 2015b; Rosyidin & Kusumawardhana, 2022, pp. 12–13)

In the Bali Democracy Forum, formed by the previous president SBY in 2008, it was noted that Jokowi was absent from the forum promoting democracy several times. This shows that there has been a shift in the orientation of

Indonesia's foreign policy. If SBY shows a high commitment to BDF as a platform for Indonesian democratic diplomacy, then Jokowi focuses more on domestic issues and infrastructure development, with low involvement in this multilateral democratic forum (Rosyidin & Kusumawardhana, 2024, p. 6; TEMPO, 2015; Victor, 2015). These facts show that in the context of foreign policy, Jokowi tends to avoid diplomatic processes involving many actors, norms, and consensus, such as in multilateral forums. On the contrary, Jokowi focuses more on concrete results such as investment and bilateral memoranda of understanding (MoU), which are not bound by collective consensus.

The third indicator of a pragmatic leadership style is the low priority on international branding efforts (state branding) or building Indonesia's image as a normative actor at the global level. In this context, President Jokowi emphasizes a foreign policy that is directly oriented towards national interests, without paying too much attention to international perceptions of Indonesia. One example that reflects this tendency is how the Trisakti concept, which was once introduced by Indonesia's first President, Sukarno, was revived by Jokowi in the political process and his foreign policy vision. Trisakti, which includes political sovereignty, economic independence, and personality in culture, is the basis for formulating the direction of Indonesia's foreign policy, which focuses more on domestic interests than international image (Shekhar, 2018; Weatherbee, 2016, p. 10).

The four main priorities carried by Jokowi in his first term foreign policy, namely promoting Indonesia as an archipelagic maritime country, strengthening Indonesia's role as a middle power in the region, giving new focus to the Indo-Pacific region, and reforming the foreign policy process (KPU, 2014). This priority is inseparable from the role of Rizal Sukma and Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan, who are two great figures who recommended the vision and mission of foreign policy during the presidential election campaign. The ambition to promote Indonesia as a strong maritime archipelagic country from political, economic, and security aspects, then gave birth to the Global Maritime Axis concept. To handle all of this, Jokowi asked the Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan to replace Rizal Ramli to revive Indonesia's maritime development plan, because this sector is the main key to Indonesia's economic growth in the future (Sukma, 2014; Weatherbee, 2016, p. 165). This leadership style indicates a nationalist and pragmatic orientation that is more directed at

strengthening Indonesia's position substantively, not merely for the sake of global image (Shekhar, 2018).

Jokowi's attitude of not prioritizing international image is also clearly seen in his decision to continue executing drug convicts in January and April 2015, despite widespread criticism from the international community. This decision was taken on the basis of national interests, especially in the context of law enforcement and maintaining social stability domestically, without considering the negative impact on Indonesia's image in the eyes of the world (Firdaus, 2016; Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2015a; Shekhar, 2018).

In addition, in the case of violations by Chinese fishing vessels in Natuna waters, Jokowi showed a firm response by holding a limited meeting on board the Indonesian Warship Imam Bonjol-383, as a symbol of affirming Indonesia's sovereignty in the region. This action represents more of a practical interest in maintaining national sovereignty than simply building Indonesia's image as a moderate or normative actor at the international level (BBC News Indonesia, 2016; Tomsa, 2017).

According to Cabinet Secretary Pramono Anung:

“As head of government and head of state, the President wants to show that Natuna is part of the sovereignty of the NKRI (Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia)” (BBC News Indonesia, 2016).

These patterns show that Indonesia's foreign policy under Jokowi's leadership is more directed at achieving real results that are directly related to national interests, rather than focusing on building a global image or Indonesia's normative role at the international level.

#### **4.7. President Jokowi's Goal-Driven Leadership Orientation**

In foreign policy studies, leadership orientation is one of the important variables that influence how a leader formulates and makes foreign policy decisions. This orientation refers to the tendency of values, perceptions, and strategic preferences of a leader in responding to challenges and opportunities in the international environment. Foreign Policy Analysts identified one of the main types of leadership orientation, namely goal-driven leadership orientation (Hermann & Hermann, 1989, p. 366; Mintz & DeRouen Jr, 2010, pp. 115–116).

Goal-driven leadership orientation is characterized by a strong focus on

achieving a specific mission, target, or goal that is clear and measurable. Leaders with this orientation tend to solve problems directly and prioritize a task-oriented approach and concrete results (result-oriented) (Hermann & Hermann, 1989, p. 366; Kaarbo & Hermann, 1998, pp. 248–256; Mintz & DeRouen Jr, 2010, pp. 115–116).

In this context, foreign policy is positioned as an instrument to achieve the development agenda and domestic strategic interests, not as the main means to promote universal values or normative principles. In addition, leaders with this orientation tend not to rely too much on the support of international coalitions or multilateral processes, but rather emphasize steps that can provide real benefits to the country. Thus, goal-driven orientation becomes an important framework in understanding how the leadership characteristics of a head of state can shape the direction and narrative of foreign policy, including in the context of South-South Cooperation.

President Jokowi's Goal-Driven Leadership Orientation refers to the tendency of leadership that prioritizes the achievement of specific and measurable targets or missions in both domestic and foreign policies. This orientation reflects a pragmatic approach in which foreign policy is viewed as an instrument to support the national development agenda and strategic interests, rather than as the main means to promote abstract values or universal principles.

This study conceptualizes President Jokowi's goal-driven leadership orientation through three main indicators. First, the main focus on achieving clear targets or missions, such as accelerating national development and increasing Indonesia's influence in the region. Second, the inward-looking tendency, in which foreign policy decisions are closely related to the domestic agenda, especially economic growth and infrastructure development. Third, the use of a material approach that emphasizes concrete economic benefits and tangible results, compared to normative considerations or universal values.

The first indicator of goal-driven leadership is the primary focus on achieving a specific and measurable mission or target. This pattern is clearly visible in President Jokowi's pragmatic leadership style, especially in his foreign policy which emphasizes economic diplomacy. The focus of foreign policy, which was previously directed at building Indonesia's image as a good global citizen, has shifted to being more oriented towards achieving concrete national interests, especially in terms of economic development. Diplomats are also

directed to carry out a more functional role as "salesmen" who promote Indonesian products and markets internationally, in line with the leadership orientation that places diplomacy as an instrument to support the national development mission (Susilo et al., 2024; Tomsa, 2017).

Jokowi's approach that focuses on development can also be seen from the state capital participation of state-owned enterprises (BUMN) in the SBY and Jokowi eras. From these two leaderships, there is a significant difference in numbers. A source from the Chief Economist of PT Permodalan BMT Ventura Awalil Rizky revealed that the total state capital participation in the SBY era during 2005-2014 reached IDR 46.98 trillion, while state capital participation in BUMN in the Jokowi era from 2015-2024 reached IDR 355.72 trillion. It is recorded that this value is more than 7 times greater than the state capital participation in the SBY era (Kamalina, 2023b).

The state tends to focus on massive infrastructure development in the Jokowi era, where he involves state-owned construction companies such as PT Hutama Karya (HK) which often receive state capital participation. HK received state capital participation of IDR 10.5 trillion during the transition period of Jokowi's leadership from the first to the second period in 2019. In 2020, HK received capital participation of IDR 11 trillion, then in the following year HK received IDR 6.2 trillion and an additional IDR 9 trillion. In 2022, HK received state capital participation of IDR 23.85 trillion and in 2023 IDR 28.9 trillion. At the end of Jokowi's leadership era, HK received an allocation of state capital participation of IDR 18.6 trillion.

Segara Institute Executive Director Piter Abdullah Redjalam assessed that there were differences in managing state capital participation in the two leaderships in the SBY and Jokowi eras. The portion of state capital participation in the Jokowi era seemed larger in BUMN karya, because Jokowi's focus at that time was infrastructure development. While in the SBY era, the assignment to BUMN for development did not seem as much as Jokowi. According to Piter, "SBY did not have many programs. Capital expenditure during SBY's era was very small. Therefore, SBY did not utilize many BUMNs for his large projects (Kamalina, 2023b).

SBY's leadership was different from Jokowi's since he first took office, Jokowi was very active in building strategic projects for infrastructure through BUMN Karya. According to Piter, Jokowi's decision to use BUMN to build

infrastructure was due to the incompetent performance of private companies. Jokowi considered that many development projects such as toll roads that were worked on by the private sector were not completed and had many obstacles (Tempo, 2017).

In the 2024 state capital participation, the Jokowi government was recorded as having distributed investment funds worth IDR 30.7 trillion. The investment value was distributed to PT Hutama Karya worth IDR 18.6 trillion for the Trans Sumatra Toll Road project which was previously worked on by Waskita Karya, then IDR 1.89 trillion to PT Sarana Multigriya Finansial, IDR 649.2 billion to PT Len Industri, IDR 3.56 trillion to PT Bahana Pembinaan for the settlement of Jiwasraya policies, Rp. 6 trillion to PT WIKA for the construction of the Jakarta-Bandung high-speed rail project (Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia, 2023).

Jokowi's goal-driven leadership orientation drives the performance of BUMN through state capital participation in order to accelerate national infrastructure development. The data above indicates that Jokowi uses BUMN as a development instrument, so that Indonesia can accelerate domestic connectivity and also create a foundation for expanding Indonesia's influence abroad. BUMN that has proven successful in carrying out large projects domestically becomes an important portfolio in Indonesia's economic diplomacy, so that the market expansion agenda in Africa can run smoothly. In this case, Jokowi sees that penetration of the African market cannot only rely on a business- to-business approach and a normative approach. A pragmatic approach is needed, where BUMN becomes the main driving force in seeking the African market. This fact shows that Jokowi's leadership style is not only assertive-pragmatic domestically, but also in the context of narrating the SSC in Africa to show Indonesia as a provider of concrete solutions for infrastructure, transportation and construction development.

The second indicator of goal-driven leadership orientation is the tendency to be inward-looking, which is when foreign policy is positioned primarily as an instrument to support domestic agendas and national development, rather than as an effort to build a broader international role or image. Inward-looking in foreign affairs does not necessarily mean a rejection of international interaction or isolationism. Instead, it can be properly understood as a foreign policy approach that focuses on national development, where the main priority is placed on

achieving domestic goals. Within this framework, Jokowi tends to view foreign relations as a pragmatic instrument that must be able to support the national development agenda, especially in the fields of infrastructure, investment, and public welfare. This kind of focus can be seen in how the Jokowi government only establishes international cooperation if the cooperation can provide benefits for domestic development, such as economic cooperation, trade, and investment that can accelerate national economic growth. This approach tends to be different from the focus of the previous foreign policy (SBY) which positioned Indonesia as a normative party in global issues (Tomsa, 2017).

President Jokowi's inward-looking leadership orientation is reflected in the low interest in foreign activities that are not directly related to the domestic development agenda. This is evident from Jokowi's absence from the UN General Assembly for two consecutive years in 2016, even though the forum had previously been used by Indonesian presidents to convey Indonesia's position and image on the global stage (Wardah, 2022; Weatherbee, 2017). A similar pattern was also seen when Jokowi did not attend the 2015 APEC leaders' meeting, even though the event was attended by important figures from various countries (VOA Indonesia, 2015). In contrast, Jokowi's attendance at the 2014 APEC and 2016 G20 forums, both hosted by China under Xi Jinping's leadership, indicated a stronger preference for pragmatic bilateral relations, rather than active involvement in high-level multilateral diplomacy as had characterized previous leadership (Weatherbee, 2017).

The third indicator of goal-driven leadership orientation is the material approach, namely the tendency of leaders to view international relations and foreign policy primarily as a means to obtain tangible and measurable material benefits for the country. This approach focuses more on economic, trade, investment, and other concrete resources, rather than ideological, normative, or symbolic aspects. In this context, foreign policy is not directed at promoting universal values, international norms, or the country's image at the global level, but rather focuses on ensuring that Indonesia's involvement on the international stage can generate direct economic benefits that support domestic development, especially in the infrastructure, trade, and people's welfare sectors (Shekhar, 2018; Weatherbee, 2016).

One example is President Jokowi's policy in promoting maritime diplomacy through the Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) concept in 2014. This

concept reflects a material approach in Indonesia's foreign policy, where international relations are positioned as an instrument to achieve concrete national economic interests. GMF is not just a symbolic discourse on Indonesia's maritime identity, but is implemented as a policy framework that emphasizes the optimization of marine resources to support domestic development. GMF is the basis for Indonesia in proposing the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) concept which emphasizes inclusiveness and maritime cooperation in the region. In the international realm, Jokowi links this vision to infrastructure projects and investment facilities such as at the APEC CEO Forum and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Business Summit (Agastia, 2023).

This GMF concept then gave birth to several policies such as the construction of a sea toll road in 2015 to address the disparity between the East and West. It is recorded that during Jokowi's leadership, the government has succeeded in operating what was initially only 3 ships in 2015, increasing to 39 ships in 2024. These ships transport goods and logistics from the main port to areas that have so far been underserved by goods distribution channels. This sea toll is also operated to support the development of underdeveloped, frontier, outermost and border areas in order to minimize price disparities and scarcity of goods (Sari, 2024).

The second policy is the eradication of illegal fishing. Under Minister Susi Pudjiastuti, Indonesia is pushing the agenda of a moratorium on foreign ship permits, sinking foreign ships that steal fish and the formation of Task Force 115 to eradicate illegal fishing. The purpose of this agenda is to demonstrate Indonesia's firmness in enforcing maritime law and strengthening Indonesia's maritime sovereignty. It is recorded that Task Force 115 has sunk 317 foreign ships that fish illegally in Indonesian waters (Wardah, 2018). The third policy is the development of maritime infrastructure including the modernization of ports such as Tanjung Priok, Kuala Tanjung and Makassar New Port, then the revitalization of small ports and collection ports and strengthening of national sea logistics routes. The purpose of this policy is to increase the efficiency of logistics distribution and integration with the sea toll program (Imaniah, 2024; Pemerintah Provinsi Sumatera Utara, 2015; Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2016a). It is recorded that during Jokowi's leadership, the government has built 28 new ports and 165 port rehabilitations throughout Indonesia (Laksono, 2024).

This approach is clearly seen in the government's efforts to encourage the

development of maritime infrastructure such as sea toll roads, strengthening strategic ports, and investment diplomacy in the maritime sector. With a pragmatic and goal-driven leadership orientation, President Jokowi uses maritime diplomacy as an extension of the national development agenda that targets economic growth, regional equality, and improving people's welfare. This is in line with the characteristics of the material approach as identified by Shekhar (2018) and Weatherbee (2016), which emphasize that foreign policy functions to produce real benefits that can be felt directly by the community, rather than to promote universal values or build a normative image at the global level. Thus, the GMF reflects the transformation of Indonesia's diplomatic role from symbolism to instrumentalism oriented towards domestic interests.

This material approach pattern is in line with the general characteristics of pragmatic and goal-driven leadership, where the main priority is achieving concrete targets and real results that can be felt by the community. Thus, foreign policy becomes an extension of the national development agenda that is material and economic, not just an instrument of international image or the formation of global norms (Weatherbee, 2016).

#### **4.8. Jokowi's Doer-Type Psycho-Milieu: A Goal-Oriented and Action-Driven Leader**

In foreign policy studies, the concept of psycho-milieu refers to a leader's perception, interpretation, and perspective on the international environment that forms the basis for making foreign policy decisions (Sprout & Sprout, 1957). Psycho-milieu is not only influenced by objective conditions abroad, but more on how a leader understands and constructs a mental map of the international situation being faced.

In the context of President Joko Widodo, the psycho-milieu that is formed is the doer type, namely a mindset and perception that sees the international world as an arena for global economic and market opportunities that must be utilized for the benefit of national development. This type is in contrast to the thinker type which tends to be reflective, normative, and views the international world as a space for solidarity or global moral values (Mintz & DeRouen Jr., 2010; Saunders, 2017).

A leader with the doer type has the following characteristics: First, Seeing the international world as an arena for global economic and market opportunities. In this case, foreign policy is not used to promote universal values or global solidarity, but rather as a means to strengthen exports, attract foreign investment, and open access to international resources. Second, Having a simple and direct mindset towards the international situation (low conceptual complexity). Leaders with this type tend not to overly complicate the decision-making process, but rather prefer practical, adaptive, and immediately executable steps. Third, Focus on concrete results such as increasing investment, trade, exports, and infrastructure development. The orientation of foreign policy is directed directly to achieving measurable benefits, especially to support the domestic development agenda (Mintz & DeRouen Jr., 2010; Saunders, 2017).

The psycho-milieu doer type attached to Jokowi cannot be separated from his pragmatic leadership background, oriented towards development, and not too tied to idealism or global rhetoric. This is also related to the structure of the inner circle or inner circle of policy makers around Jokowi, which tends to consist of technocrats and policy implementers (doers), rather than the dominance of strategic or ideological thinkers (Hermann & Preston, 1994; Saunders, 2017).

During President Joko Widodo's leadership, the configuration of key actors in the process of formulating Indonesia's foreign policy has shifted significantly. No longer relying solely on career diplomats or traditional bureaucratic elites, Jokowi instead relies on professional figures and technocratic politicians who are able to support a more pragmatic and concrete results-oriented foreign policy orientation. This configuration is in line with the psycho-milieu doer character that is strongly embedded in Jokowi's leadership. As a leader with a psycho-milieu doer type, Jokowi shows a strong tendency to focus on real action and measurable results in various aspects of government, including foreign policy. Rather than getting caught up in normative narratives or ideological symbolism, Jokowi emphasizes the importance of diplomacy that can generate direct benefits for domestic economic development, such as increasing exports, market access, investment, and strengthening infrastructure.

In this context, some key figures in Jokowi's inner circle of foreign policy play a strategic role, namely Rizal Sukma, Retno Marsudi, and Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan (Karim et al., 2023; Weatherbee, 2016, pp. 7–8). Rizal Sukma is an Indonesian academic and senior diplomat. He is known as one of the main

architects of Indonesian foreign policy, especially in the early period of President Joko Widodo's (Jokowi) administration. As a senior researcher at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Indonesia, one of the most influential think tanks in Indonesian foreign policy, Sukma promoted the idea of the Global Maritime Fulcrum, which became a major icon of Jokowi's foreign policy early in his term (Weatherbee, 2016, p. 17). Retno, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, is a professional diplomat trusted by Jokowi to translate this pragmatic vision into a more functional diplomatic framework, placing economic cooperation as a top priority. Under Jokowi's direction, Retno was encouraged to carry out "commercial diplomacy" aimed at expanding market access and strengthening the position of Indonesian products on the international stage (B. J. Susilo et al., 2024).

Meanwhile, Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan, as Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs and Investment, is a concrete representation of how Jokowi utilizes figures with extensive connections, military backgrounds, and strategic experience to support Indonesia's global economic development agenda. Luhut not only plays a role in maritime issues but is also a key actor in encouraging foreign investment, especially from China, and expanding Indonesia's involvement in large-scale infrastructure projects that are integrated with Indonesia's geoeconomic interests (Connelly, 2014, pp. 7–8; Dorigné-Thomson, 2023).

The presence of these figures also illustrates how Jokowi as a doer leader tends to choose and respond to input from actors who are able to offer practical and implementable solutions, rather than just normative discourse or conceptual debate. This pattern explains why Indonesia's foreign policy in the Jokowi era has shifted towards strong pragmatism, with diplomacy functioning optimally as an instrument to support the national development agenda. As a consequence of this type, Indonesia's foreign policy under Jokowi shows a tendency to be adaptive, practical, and result-oriented, where diplomacy is directed to support the domestic development agenda, especially in the economic and infrastructure sectors, compared to promoting normative values at the global level.

The first indicator of Doer's Psycho-Milieu, namely seeing the international world as an arena for economic opportunities or global markets, is reflected in Jokowi's tendency to view foreign relations not as an arena for diplomatic abstraction, but as an instrument to support domestic economic interests. Connelly (2014) noted that Jokowi showed relatively low interest in

normative or multilateral foreign issues that were considered to have less concrete impact on the people. This is in line with Jokowi and Prabowo's criticism of SBY's foreign policy which was considered too abstract and not oriented enough towards real benefits for the people. In his vision and mission during the 2014 Presidential Election, Jokowi firmly stated that diplomacy would be carried out selectively, with the main focus on the interests of the people, especially through increasing market access, investment, and concrete economic cooperation. Thus, Jokowi's mindset in viewing the international world is more oriented towards efforts to utilize globalization to encourage national economic growth, rather than simply being involved in normative multilateral forums.

During SBY's leadership, Indonesia's international role was often the main narrative of foreign policy. However, when Jokowi became president, there were indications that he was abandoning global politics, thus raising concerns for the international community that under Jokowi's leadership, Indonesia would reduce its involvement in the ASEAN multilateral platform or even withdraw from the regionalism project (Rosyidin & Pattipeilohy, 2020a; Widiatmaja & Albab, 2019). Jokowi's leadership in foreign policy matters tends to resemble a mayoral approach style which gives the impression that foreign policy is only a secondary priority (Weatherbee, 2016).

Another example is in the case of the South China Sea dispute involving the Natuna region with China. Instead of engaging in direct confrontation, Jokowi tends to be consistent in maintaining bilateral relations with China as a strategic partner in advancing strategic infrastructure projects, especially those related to the BRI agenda domestically (Intan, 2023). In addition to the Jakarta-Bandung high-speed rail project, there are also infrastructure projects in Jatigade, Asahan, and the Suramadu Bridge which are indirectly related to Power-China International Group Limited. This company is recorded as having invested 5 billion USD in Indonesia (Paskalis, 2016).

The fact that Jokowi chose to prioritize diplomacy, de-escalation, and the use of informal channels through figures such as Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan as a curator emphasizes his focus on achieving concrete results in the economic sector, while minimizing disruptions due to maritime conflicts that have the potential to hinder the national development agenda. Furthermore, the role of curators such as Luhut can be understood as a political instrument used by Jokowi to ensure policy coherence amidst domestic bureaucratic fragmentation. The decision to prioritize

an informal approach in harmonizing inter-institutional interests, as revealed by Karim and Wicaksana (2023, pp. 143-145), not only shows the dynamics of Indonesian bureaucratic politics but also illustrates Jokowi's preference to avoid a confrontational approach that could damage the investment climate. This is in line with the characteristics of a pragmatic doer, who is results-oriented and views the international world as an extension of domestic development strategies.

The second indicator, namely a simple and direct mindset in responding to international situations (low conceptual complexity), is clearly reflected in Jokowi's attitude towards foreign policy. One example is when an Australian journalist asked him whether he would attend the G20 Summit in Brisbane on 15–16 November 2014. Instead of giving an answer that took into account various global strategic dynamics and interests, Jokowi simply pointed to Rizal Sukma and said, "if he says 'yes, you go', I will go" (Connelly, 2014b). This statement shows Jokowi's tendency to simplify foreign issues into practical and delegative decisions, without the involvement of complex analysis related to Indonesia's strategic position in global forums such as the G20. This attitude is in line with the characteristics of a leader with low conceptual complexity, namely tending to view international dynamics directly, practically, and not overly complicating them within the broader framework of Indonesia's identity or geopolitical vision. Thus, Jokowi's foreign policy reflects a more pragmatic approach, with a primary focus on concrete matters that are easy to understand and have a direct impact on national interests.

Another example is clearly seen in the pro-people diplomacy approach adopted by President Joko Widodo (Jokowi), especially in his first term in office. According to Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi, Jokowi explicitly stated that the implementation of Indonesia's foreign policy must not be distant from the interests of the people, and must be grounded in accordance with its vision and mission. Retno said that "The implementation of Indonesia's foreign policy must not be distant from the interests of the people. This is in accordance with the vision and mission that has been conveyed by the president" (CNN Indonesia, 2014). One concrete manifestation of this approach is Jokowi's direction to ambassadors to conduct "diplomatic blusukan", namely by actively approaching local communities in the country of placement in order to build direct and responsive relationships. In addition, Jokowi also encourages the use of social media as a means of diplomatic communication, with the aim of conveying

foreign policy directly and easily understood by the wider community (Wicaksana & Wardhana, 2021).

Jokowi's informal diplomatic communication style was demonstrated when he delivered the Global Maritime Fulcrum vision not at the palace or an official forum, but at the Sunda Kelapa port, a very populist location that is far from exclusive. This action demonstrates Jokowi's preference for a simple and pro-people diplomatic approach (Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2016b). Thus, Jokowi's pro-people diplomacy reflects a foreign leadership style with low conceptual complexity, where international relations are not formulated in ideological or multidimensional narratives, but rather delivered in the form of concrete policies that are close to domestic interests and easily accessible to the public. This approach is consistent with the character of a pragmatic leader who avoids global jargon but still emphasizes real performance and people's involvement in the country's diplomatic process.

The third indicator of the doer mindset in Jokowi's leadership is his tendency to focus foreign policy on concrete results, such as increasing investment, trade, exports, and infrastructure development. This orientation is clearly seen from how Jokowi views international forums, not merely as normative diplomatic events, but as a means to open up economic opportunities that have a direct impact on national development.

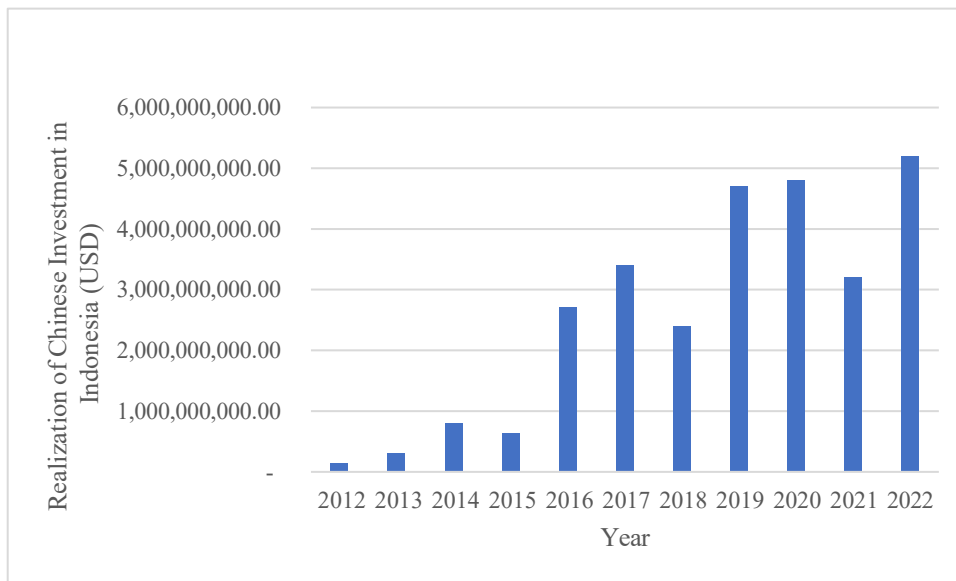
Empirical data on this tendency can be seen, among other things, from Jokowi's proactive attitude in utilizing the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) initiated by Chinese President Xi Jinping. On various occasions, Jokowi has openly supported BRI, but not because of ideological or geopolitical considerations alone, but because this initiative is considered in line with Indonesia's concrete needs in terms of infrastructure and economic development in the regions. For example, in the 2017 and 2019 Belt and Road Forum meetings, Jokowi offered various strategic Indonesian projects to attract foreign investment, especially from China. Some of these include the development of the Morowali Industrial Estate in Central Sulawesi which received an investment injection of USD 650 million, infrastructure development in North Sumatra, North Sulawesi, and North Kalimantan, as well as projects in the energy and transportation sectors (Ministry of Transportation of the Republic of Indonesia, 2017; Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Indonesia, 2017; merdeka.com, 2017; Widowati, 2019).

In addition, Jokowi has also consistently encouraged the heads of

Indonesian representatives abroad to be more active in carrying out economic diplomacy, with clear and measurable targets. These directives include increasing exports, opening up new market access, and attracting concrete foreign investment, as seen in the meeting of the heads of Indonesian representatives in 2021 (Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2023). Statistically, this approach is also reflected in the significant increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) into Indonesia during Jokowi's leadership. Data from the Investment Coordinating Board (BKPM) shows that in 2022, Indonesia's investment realization reached IDR 1,207 trillion, exceeding the target set by the government and becoming the highest in Indonesian history. Most of this investment went into the infrastructure, manufacturing, and natural resource downstream sectors areas that are Jokowi's priorities (Rachman, 2023).

Another example that emphasizes Jokowi's focus on concrete results is the Jakarta- Bandung High-Speed Train project, the first major transportation infrastructure project in Southeast Asia involving an Indonesia-China consortium. This project not only improves connectivity, but also reflects efforts to transfer technology and accelerate development that are characteristic of Jokowi's leadership orientation (Tempo, 2023). It is recorded that during Jokowi's tenure, the realization of Chinese investment in Indonesia has increased quite significantly. In 2022, China recorded an investment of 5.18 billion USD, or a jump of 63.92% from the previous year. This figure is the highest record in the last decade. China is recorded to have 1,584 investment projects in Indonesia in 2022 with Japan and Malaysia below it.

**Figure 4.2 Realization of Chinese Investment in Indonesia (USD)**



Source: (A. M. H. Putri, 2023) from the Indonesian Capital Investment Coordinating Board (BKPM)

Thus, Jokowi's leadership pattern in the context of foreign relations shows the typical characteristics of a doer with low conceptual complexity who tends to prioritize concrete and measurable results in the economic sector, rather than engaging in abstract narratives or political symbolism on the international stage. Thus, Jokowi's mindset of focusing on concrete results is clearly reflected in his tendency to use foreign policy instruments selectively to achieve measurable targets in the economic sector, especially investment, trade, exports, and infrastructure development. This attitude is in line with the characteristics of a doer, namely a leader who prioritizes action, real results, and concrete impacts, rather than engaging in conceptual debates or abstract strategic identities.

#### **4.9. Jokowi's Pragmatic SSC Narrative for Africa**

Leaders with pragmatic style, goal-driven, and psycho-milieu doer leadership styles tend to form pragmatic South-South Cooperation (SSC) narratives, which emphasize concrete benefits, especially in the economic sector such as investment, trade, exports, and infrastructure. The pragmatic SSC narrative itself can be understood as Indonesia's way of narrating South-South cooperation not merely as a form of ideological solidarity or diplomatic symbol, but as a strategic instrument to achieve real national interests, especially economic growth

and domestic development. Leaders with a pragmatic leadership style tend to avoid abstract diplomatic rhetoric or idealism. They view foreign policy as a practical instrument to achieve national interests. In the context of SSC, this pragmatism makes Jokowi not see SSC as merely a symbol of Global South solidarity or the historical legacy of non-aligned politics, but as a platform to obtain concrete benefits, such as increased trade, investment, and exports. As a goal-driven leader, Jokowi is more interested in measurable and directly impactful achievements, such as economic growth or infrastructure development. SSC that is too normative or symbolic is seen as less relevant. Therefore, the narrative of Indonesia's SSC under Jokowi is focused as a means to encourage exports, open non-traditional markets such as Africa, and attract investment that supports the domestic development agenda. As a figure with a psycho-milieu doer type, Jokowi shows a strong tendency to prioritize concrete actions over lengthy normative discussions. In the context of SSC, this is reflected in the way Indonesia is more active in encouraging concrete economic cooperation to Africa, such as trade missions, exports of superior products, infrastructure development, or promotion of Indonesian SOEs, rather than simply strengthening the political discourse of Global South solidarity.

To understand how Indonesia under Jokowi narrates south-south cooperation, FPA scholars have previously suggested focusing on micro politics, namely the individual factors of a leader. It is important to understand Jokowi's political journey as an individual, so that later it can be seen how individual factors influence Indonesia's behavior in narrating south-south cooperation in Africa. In 2014, Jokowi competed with his political opponent Prabowo Subianto to win the presidential election. At that time, in the context of foreign policy, both candidates rejected the high-profile globalism approach of the previous President Susilo Bambang Yudhono (SBY). Both promised to navigate Indonesia's foreign policy towards more relevant issues such as economic interests and social issues (Weatherbee, 2016). This has led some Indonesian foreign policy experts to view Jokowi's leadership as inward-looking by adhering to the free and active principle that was initiated in 1948.

Retno Marsudi, who was trusted by Jokowi to become the number one person in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during his two terms of leadership (2014-2024). In Marsudi's biography, it is explained that Jokowi once told the leaders of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that Indonesia has the potential to

improve the trade balance. On February 2, 2015 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jokowi said:

“Actually, opportunities are everywhere and the opportunities that are taken on which side are very visible. During the three months of being president, 90 percent of his affairs were about the economy” (B. J. Susilo et al., 2024, p. 29).

Jokowi emphasized that Indonesian products have huge market potential in Africa, for example garment products. Therefore, the heads of representatives were asked to concentrate more on economic diplomacy, especially in promoting products, attracting investment for both labor-intensive and capital-intensive industries. Jokowi asked ambassadors and diplomats to conduct field research on local products that could be sold abroad (B. J. Susilo et al., 2024, p. 30).

At the opening of the Asia Africa conference on April 21, 2015 at the Jakarta Convention Center (JCC), Jokowi said that:

"Now is the time for Asian African countries to strengthen cooperation in the economic sector, in the trade sector, in the investment sector. Now is the time for the business world to take a bigger role and realize the spirit of Bandung that we strengthen through the Commemoration of the Asian African Conference this year" (Ministry of State Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2015).

This speech shows Jokowi's assertive-pragmatic leadership style in encouraging economic cooperation with Asian-African countries through the SSC narrative. The collective spirit of Asian-African countries born from the 1955 Bandung conference is no longer understood as a symbol of struggle, but rather directed towards more concrete things such as more strategic trade and investment (Ministry of State Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2015).

In the 2015 Asian African Business Summit (AABS) forum, Jokowi asked the heads of representatives in each country and their staff to be able to invite business people in their countries of placement to attend this forum. In a study by the Ministry of Trade of the Republic of Indonesia, African countries such as Egypt and Ivory Coast are potential markets for Indonesia. Jokowi's vision was then responded to by the Chairman of the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce Suryo Bambang Sulistio who said:

“The Asia-Africa Partnership is entering a very interesting period, in

the last decade the economic growth projections have improved on both continents, this opens up opportunities for greater economic and business cooperation, which have not been fully explored” (Ministry of State Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2015).

At the opening of the 2015 Asia-Africa Conference at the Jakarta Convention Center (JCC), on April 22, 2015, Jokowi said that:

“We must grow and progress together by increasing trade and investment between us. By building economic cooperation between the Asia and Africa regions, by helping each other in building connectivity, building infrastructure that connects our ports, our airports, and our roads. Indonesia will work to become a maritime bridge connecting the two continents” (Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2015b).

This speech indicates that Jokowi narrated the SSC as an instrument to encourage economic growth through collaboration between global south countries. Jokowi positioned Indonesia as an active participant in providing economic cooperation initiatives with African countries. Through his speech, Jokowi stated that:

“I am of the opinion that the management of the world economy cannot be left to the three international financial institutions alone. We must build a new world economic order that is open to new economic powers. We urge the reform of the global financial architecture to eliminate the dominance of one group of countries over other countries” (Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2015b).

This message indicates that Jokowi explicitly called for SSC to be an alternative to the old exclusive economic order. Where this cooperation is expected to be an inclusive cooperation framework. Then at the Asia Africa conference on April 22, 2015, Jokowi gave a speech that underlined the importance of the 1955 Asia Africa conference as an idea of Bung Karno who fought for justice and opposed all forms of imperialism. Jokowi said that the spirit of Bandung is the essence of creating prosperity and providing justice for all people. This is because there is still injustice and imbalance that still occurs. Jokowi said:

“Let's reignite the Bandung spirit let's continue the struggles of our forefathers 60 years ago. We have to work hand in hand to increase the prosperity of our people through economic cooperation and trade” (Republic of Indonesia Cabinet Secretariat,2015c).

In this speech, it can be understood that the SSC narrative is not only used by Jokowi as a symbol of solidarity but also as a stepping stone for a concrete economic cooperation agenda with Global South countries including Africa. This reflects Jokowi's pragmatic leadership style, where the history of the 1955 Bandung Conference is used as a driver for the establishment of real and productive economic cooperation, and not just romanticism of the past (Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2015c). At the 2017 G20 Summit in Germany during the Leaders Retreat meeting, Jokowi said that the G20 must partner with African countries, he said:

“We want to realize the political closeness that has been built since 1955 into real economic closeness by encouraging investment, reducing and eliminating trade barriers and increasing technical cooperation” (Jordan, 2017).

Jokowi emphasized that cooperation with African countries must be carried out by respecting African values and culture. Damaging or exploiting these countries will only hinder the development process. By adhering to these principles, economic growth can take place sustainably. Jokowi added "Therefore, Indonesia supports the G20 Africa Partnership and the achievement of Agenda 2063 in Africa through the Compact with Africa" (Jordan, 2017).

Indonesia's foreign policy orientation in Africa tends to shift under Jokowi's leadership towards something more concrete and more focused on trade relations compared to the SBY Era which tended to be more normative. Jokowi clearly perceives Africa as a potential market, even calling the African continent a continent of hope for Indonesia's economic growth (B. J. Susilo et al., 2024). One form of Jokowi's efforts to narrate SSC in African countries for the benefit of economic diplomacy is the Indonesia-Africa Forum (IAF).

IAF is a forum organized by the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Jokowi as president directly oversees this forum. Although directly under the auspices of the President, this forum is not yet at the summit or ministerial level, and has not been officially institutionalized as a routine forum held every two or three years. The forum, known as Africa+1, usually involves leaders from African countries, both presidents and ministers. The main objective of this forum is to strengthen socio-political, economic, and cultural relations between African countries and Indonesia. Investment issues are a major topic at the IAF, with Jokowi preferring business forums that promise concrete results.

On 10-11 April 2018 in Bali, for the first time Indonesia initiated the IAF, as a framework for economic cooperation between Indonesia and African countries by prioritizing the narrative of the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference. With the theme "Developing Sustainable Economic and Investment Cooperation," Jokowi pushed for real results, especially in the economic sector. At the opening of this forum, Indonesia through Vice President Jusuf Kalla, Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi, Trade Minister Enggartiasto Lukita and several other Ministers from the Working Cabinet signed a business agreement worth USD 586.56 million. Followed by another business agreement worth USD 499.2 million at the end of the forum. Minister Retno Marsudi highlighted Indonesia's commitment to increasing economic cooperation with African countries and strengthening Indonesia's presence in Africa (Tralac, 2018).

This forum is not only a symbol of strengthening the SSC, but a concrete form of Indonesia's results-based economic diplomacy approach. The economic cooperation agreement from the AIF forum is Jokowi's active step to expand Indonesia's market penetration in Africa and build more structured cooperation in strategic sectors such as energy, infrastructure, digital economy, strategic industry and agriculture. This business forum was attended by approximately 500 participants from 53 African countries (Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2018).

To coordinate Indonesia's strategic market expansion project to Africa, the Coordinating Ministry for Maritime Affairs initiated the formation of the Indonesian Infrastructure Task Force to Africa. This task force functions to solve every problem and obstacle to market expansion in Africa. Members of the task force consist of the government, SOEs, the private sector and national banking (Budiman, 2018; Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2018; Nastiti, 2018). As chairman of the Task Force to Africa, the Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs, Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan said:

“We must focus on the formation of a task force to Africa to help solve the problem. We want everything to be easy, we will adjust the regulations, we prepare the financing mechanism. What is important is based on the interests of the nation, transparency is absolute. PT INKA will have a train project in Africa, as will PT WIKA and other state-owned construction companies build infrastructure there. PT PAL and PT DI will expand there, Standard Chartered and Bank Exim will also be involved” (Liputan6.com, 2018).

Countries targeted by economic cooperation projects include Senegal, Nigeria, Mozambique, Zambia, Algeria and various other African countries. Luhut emphasized that President Jokowi's direction was to seek new market share and expand to the African continent on the basis of mutual benefit. According to Luhut, Indonesia is currently too dependent on traditional markets from Asian and European countries (Budiman, 2018).

At the Indonesia-Africa Infrastructure Dialogue on August 20, 2019 at the Bali Nusa Dua Convention Center, Jokowi said that:

“Indonesia and Africa are great powers if we unite. Indonesia and Africa can realize dreams of progress if we unite. Indonesia and Africa can jump higher, even many times, if we unite. Indonesia is ready and very, very happy to work with our brothers and sisters in Africa. I want to make sure and emphasize, Indonesia is a trusted friend. Indonesia is your true partner, your trusted friend. This is the time for Indonesia and Africa to pour it into real steps, quick and tactical steps, in order to realize a prosperous, prosperous, and united Indonesian and African society. Let us build our country, let us strengthen the infrastructure between our countries to improve connectivity between Indonesia and Africa, to increase the flow of trade between Indonesia and Africa that can improve our economy, which can provide welfare for the Indonesian nation and the nations in Africa” (President of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019).

Jokowi's speech in the Indonesia-Africa Infrastructure Dialogue explicitly indicated that Jokowi had narrated the SSC for the benefit of economic diplomacy in Africa. Jokowi stated that Indonesia is ready to share its experience in infrastructure development and offer partnerships based on technical capabilities and empirical experience with African countries. This narrative substantially shows how Jokowi uses the SSC to further encourage increased economic cooperation and investment in Africa, rather than the spread of universal values. Jokowi's speech reflects development-oriented diplomacy, where foreign cooperation is directly linked to domestic national interests, such as increasing connectivity, reducing inequality, and equitable development. In this context, Jokowi positions infrastructure development as a commodity of Indonesia's foreign diplomacy offered to African countries.

This shows Jokowi's pragmatic leadership style and is oriented towards global competitiveness. Thus, this study shows that there is a shift in the SSC narrative in Indonesia's foreign policy in Africa, which tends to be influenced by the president's leadership style as the main actor in the foreign policy-making process. Jokowi's assertive- pragmatic leadership style has become an important

catalyst in changing the way Indonesia interprets and implements SSC, from normative diplomacy to a more concrete and measurable strategic economic partnership.

Jokowi's efforts to form a Task Force on Indonesian Infrastructure to Africa by involving government and private parties, as well as the launch of the Road to Africa book as a guide for business actors, show a systematic and organized effort from the state to support Indonesia's economic diplomacy in Africa (Aris, 2018). The signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Exim Bank, as well as the discussion of the Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) with five African countries, indicate a foreign policy orientation that is not only symbolic but also transactional and oriented towards long-term economic interests (Coordinating Ministry for In the theoretical framework of actor-specific theory explained by Hudson (2005), Jokowi as head of government has a great influence in navigating the direction of Indonesia's foreign policy in Africa. With Jokowi's assertive-pragmatic leadership style, the SSC narrative is used to focus on strengthening economic diplomacy and market expansion in African countries. In contrast to SBY's leadership style which tends towards norm- entrepreneurship, Jokowi offers a more assertive pragmatic approach by encouraging international economic instruments such as SOEs and financing through the National Interest Account (NIA) scheme to support economic diplomacy in Africa (Tralac, 2018).

Jokowi's efforts to increase the economic diplomacy agenda have paid off, where in 2019 for the first time, Indonesia succeeded in agreeing to a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) with Mozambique. The PTA between Indonesia and Mozambique in 2019 is one form of SSC expansion in the African region. This fact is a clear indicator that the SSC narrative tends to be used for economic cooperation. In the framework of actor-specific theory analysis, this policy reflects the characteristics of Jokowi's assertive-pragmatic leadership style. The PTA with Mozambique is not only understood as Indonesia's first trade agreement in Africa, but this fact is also understood as a new approach that is more oriented towards market access and export expansion (Directorate General of PPI, 2019; KOMPAS.com, 2023).

Thus, the narrative of Indonesia's SSC during the SBY and Jokowi eras cannot be explained solely through a structural or systemic approach, but rather needs to be analyzed through an actor-led approach and leadership style. The

Indonesia-Mozambique Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) reflects Jokowi's SSC narrative, which is more oriented towards trade projects and economic cooperation, in line with his vision emphasizing infrastructure development and foreign market expansion to support national growth. The IM-PTA is regulated by Presidential Regulation No. 90 of 2021 and came into effect on June 6, 2022 (Directorate General of PPI, 2019). Jokowi's commitment to the African market did not stop at the 2018 IAF; on September 1–3, 2024, he held the second IAF in Bali with the theme "Bandung Spirit for Africa's Agenda 2063," which was attended by 1,400 participants up from 500 participants at the previous IAF (Katriana, 2024). The forum also includes business matching, panel discussions, and side events such as the Indonesia-Africa Parliamentary Forum (IAPF). In his speech at the HLF MSP and IAF 2024, Jokowi reiterated his commitment to economic diplomacy with Africa, Jokowi said:

“Indonesia is ready to partner with anyone, especially with the African region as the key to the global development agenda. The results of the Indonesia-Africa partnership so far have been very real, bringing a rapid increase in trade volume and various trade agreements. In fact, this year's Indonesia-Africa Forum (IAF) has recorded business agreements worth USD3.5 billion, almost six times the first IAF in 2018” (Ministry of State Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2024).

President Joko Widodo's leadership style, known as assertive-pragmatic, is reflected in the emphasis on concrete, results-based cooperation that provides direct economic benefits for Indonesia. The speech did not highlight normative values such as democracy or value-based global governance, as is characteristic of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's (SBY) narrative, which carries a normative-globalist leadership style.

Instead, Jokowi emphasized the importance of new tactical steps and inclusive development strategies, which are explicitly directed at increasing trade, investment, and economic cooperation with the African region. President Jokowi's statement that this year's Indonesia-Africa Forum (IAF) produced a business agreement value of USD3.5 billion emphasizes Indonesia's foreign policy orientation which is result-oriented. This shows that South-South cooperation is no longer merely positioned as an expression of ideological solidarity, but rather as a tool of economic diplomacy that is in line with the national development agenda, including President Jokowi's vision of strengthening the role of BUMN

in the African market.

Indonesia's foreign policy under Jokowi's leadership tends to sideline the role of ASEAN, which is considered incapable of fulfilling Indonesia's strategic aspirations. This condition encourages Indonesia to expand the scope of diplomacy to non-traditional regions, including the African region (Rosyidin & Pattipeilohy, 2020b). This argument is reinforced by the fact of the formation of the BUMN Go Global agenda (collaboration between the government, the private sector, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in targeting African markets through inbound and outbound investment opportunities (Anwar, 2020; Jones, 2020). This shows that Jokowi and the Minister of Foreign Affairs are serious about diversifying their market opportunities. Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi stated that this move was an attempt to "go beyond the spirit of Bandung" (Marsudi 2017). Indonesia's National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) states that Africa is a strategic continent for Indonesia's interests in the next few years. Given the lucrative business opportunities for Indonesia for national interests such as domestic development and prosperity (National Development Planning Agency, 2015).

President Jokowi's pro-active support for economic diplomacy in Africa is shown in his policies that support the expansion of BUMN, for example PT WIKA. According to Lubis (2020), Indonesia under Jokowi's leadership has adopted a state capitalism approach. Lubis explains how the government Indonesia has taken a significant role in pushing WIKA into Africa, to expand its influence at the global level and for the electoral interests of President Jokowi at home. The role of the state in this context includes: First, centralized planning (the government determines the strategic goals and locations of expansion). Second, economic diplomacy (the government opens market access and maintains relations with the destination country). Third, capital assistance (as the largest shareholder, the government provides capital support) (Lubis, 2020).

Within the framework of economic diplomacy in the Jokowi era, SSC in Africa is narrated not only as solidarity between developing countries, but as a strategic opportunity to expand Indonesia's export market, especially through the active involvement of BUMN and national companies in large-scale infrastructure projects in Africa. One of the main actors in this context is PT Wijaya Karya (Persero) Tbk. (WIKA), a strategic BUMN in the construction and infrastructure sector that has been involved in various projects in Africa. For example, in Niger,

WIKA worked on the renovation project of the Presidential Palace worth IDR 370 billion (the contract was signed in 2018), and received an offer to participate in other strategic projects such as power plants, public housing, as well as a railway network within the framework of the Trans-Africa program (CNBC Indonesia, 2018).

In Algeria, in 2017 WIKA was trusted to build 1,700 subsidized housing units in Baraki and El-Harrach, then 2,250 units in Ain Defla and Khemis Miliana, 400 units in Kourifa, and 1,000 units in Souidina. In total, there are 4 strategic projects in Algeria with a contract value of approximately IDR 2 trillion (DetikFinance, 2018; Hutapea & Alexander, 2018; Kencana, 2018; R. Maulana, 2018). Meanwhile, in Senegal, WIKA is involved in the development of an integrated business area known as La Tour De Goree Tower worth US\$250 million, a collaboration between the Senegalese Government and the Indonesian Export Financing Institution (LPEI/Indonesia Eximbank) (Antaraneews.com, 2019b; Rini, 2019). In Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire), in 2019 WIKA participated in a housing development and construction project with a contract value of US\$66 million (Kumparan.com, 2019). In Tanzania, WIKA obtained a liquid terminal construction project in Zanzibar worth US\$190 million (Newswire, 2019).

Overall, in the 2019 Indonesia-Africa Infrastructure Dialogue (IAID) Forum, WIKA successfully obtained business contracts with a total value of US\$640 million (Newswire, 2019). This achievement shows how economic diplomacy in the Jokowi era has shifted the orientation of South-South cooperation from symbolic solidarity to partnerships based on concrete strategic and economic interests. WIKA's success in these projects shows the ability of Indonesian SOEs to compete in the international market, especially in the construction and infrastructure sectors. This also strengthens Indonesia's position in economic diplomacy and South-South Cooperation in the African region.

In addition to PT WIKA, PT INKA's expansion into Africa during the Joko Widodo era has become increasingly intensive and strategic. In 2017, INKA exported train carriages to Nigeria, facilitated by a visit by Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi (N. Susilo, 2017). In 2019, INKA, along with PT WIKA and PT Len Industri, formed the Indonesia Railway Development Incorporated for Africa (IRDIA) consortium to develop the railway business in Africa. Government support was also evident in Jokowi's statement during a meeting with the President of Mozambique in August 2023, encouraging the export of INKA-

produced trains (Nafi'an, 2023).

The active involvement of several state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in strategic projects in Africa underscores the shift in orientation of the SSC narrative under Jokowi's administration. While under SBY, the SSC was understood as an expression of Indonesia's normative power, under Jokowi, cooperation is geared toward pragmatic, economic-based partnerships. This is reflected in the participation of various state-owned enterprises such as WIKA, Waskita Karya, Len Industri, KAI, Kimia Farma, and Bio Farma in the 2019 Indonesia-Africa Infrastructure Dialogue (IAID) Forum, which resulted in business contracts worth hundreds of millions of US dollars in the infrastructure, transportation, and pharmaceutical sectors (Antaranews.com, 2019a).

This fact was also validated by former Senegalese ambassador Dindin Wahyudin who served concurrently as Gambia, Cabo Verde, Guinea, Guinea Conakry, Cote d'ivoire, Sierra Leone, and Mali for the 2020-2023 period and then served as Expert Staff for Economic Diplomacy. In an interview session for the purposes of this research, Mr. Ambassador Wahyudin said that in the Jokowi era, African ambassadors were asked to become marketers. This is inseparable from Mr. Jokowi's background as a former businessman. So diplomacy must be able to provide concrete results. Because the orientation is concrete economic results, the SSC narrative is used to support all economic diplomacy activities. In contrast to SBY whose leadership style is globalist and outward-looking, where the main focus of his diplomacy is universal issues such as democracy and the environment (D. Wahyudin, personal communication, March 20, 2025).

Then Mr. Ambassador Wahyudin highlighted several successes of economic diplomacy in the Jokowi era. First, the entry of local products from CV. Karya Hidup Sentosa (KHS) such as the QH-11 harvester and the "Amberjack" soil processing tractor into Senegal through cooperation with local businessmen Manobi Africa (Tempo, 2022). Second, the entry of GESITS motorcycle products from PT WIKA Industri into Senegal through PT Laila Ndiaye Prima and Ndiaye Transport. The entry of GESITS Motorcycles into Senegal is the result of efforts in the economic diplomacy program to traditional markets and BUMN Go Global. The presence of GESITS motorcycles in Senegal received a positive response from prospective buyers, of which around 200 people have filled out the order form (KumparanOTO, 2021). Third, the entry of CN-235-220 aircraft from PT Dirgantara Indonesia into Senegal with a value of IDR 354 billion for the

Senegalese Air Force. The export of aircraft from Indonesia to Senegal has strategic value for the Indonesian industry, especially for supplying record export orders. By focusing on customer satisfaction, it is expected to encourage the competitiveness of Indonesian products (Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2021).

Jokowi's pragmatic approach is reflected in his direct encouragement of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) to “go global” and utilize the SSC as a means of expansion into non-traditional markets. The SSC is no longer merely a symbol of solidarity with the Global South, but has become a concrete instrument to encourage the export of services, nationally superior products, and increase foreign exchange. By positioning SOEs as national champions, the SSC is used as an external strategy aligned with the domestic development agenda. This indicates that the variation in Indonesia's foreign policy behavior in narrating the SSC in Africa is strongly influenced by leadership style: from SBY's idealistic-globalist narrative to Jokowi's pragmatic-economic narrative. The separation of economic diplomacy expert staff from socio-cultural functions through Presidential Regulation No. 56 of 2015 reflects Jokowi's firm and pragmatic leadership style (President of the Republic of Indonesia, 2015).

While the SBY era emphasized the dissemination of global values through socio-political expert staff, the Jokowi era focuses more on specifically handled economic diplomacy. This separation marks a shift in the orientation of Indonesian diplomacy from political issues to economic outcomes (B. J. Susilo et al., 2024). Indonesia's once-exclusive diplomacy is now geared towards being more down-to-earth and aligned with the interests of the people. In the context of the African SSC, this allows for the active involvement of state-owned enterprises such as WIKA, INKA, and Bio Farma in boosting exports and strengthening the national economy.

Jokowi's leadership in the context of implementing the vision of BUMN Go Global is also inseparable from his background as a businessman. All BUMN activities abroad, especially in Africa, are always based on a profit and loss analysis. The results of an interview with Mr. Mahendra Vijaya, who serves as Corporate Secretary of PT WIKA (one of Indonesia's strategic BUMNs in the infrastructure sector), stated that Jokowi will always confirm whether a project is profitable and provides concrete results, if the analysis of production costs-margins is profitable, then Jokowi will give approval. Jokowi's pragmatic

leadership style is also shown in how BUMN expansion considerations to Africa, where Jokowi is more into business considerations because his goals are business oriented. While in the SBY era, political considerations were deeper, so the analysis of the political impact must be clear (M. Vijaya, personal communication, May 23, 2025).

For the first time, Jokowi visited the African continent on August 20, 2023, with destinations to Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, and South Africa. Jokowi said:

“This is the spirit of Bandung that I will bring on my visit to Africa by strengthening solidarity and cooperation among the countries of the Global South” (President of the Republic of Indonesia, 2023).

During his visit to Tanzania, Jokowi not only met with heads of state, but also actively held business meetings with company leaders. While attending the 15th BRICS Summit in 2023, in Johannesburg, South Africa, Jokowi also used his time to strengthen bilateral cooperation on the sidelines of the forum to explore the potential for new economic cooperation (CNN Indonesia, 2023; Wibawana, 2023). Luhut, who was appointed by Jokowi as a super sherpa on the agenda to South Africa, is in the process of negotiating with the local government regarding the import of cattle and soybeans (Kamalina, 2023a). Along with his entourage, Luhut explored the potential for cooperation to import 50,000 cattle and 300,000 tons of soybeans from South Africa. Luhut said:

“This is absolutely necessary considering the increasing price of beef and the outlook from the Ministry of Agriculture which notes that we still need 40 percent of this commodity” (Kamalina, 2023a).

In general, Jokowi's visit to Africa can be understood as an effort to open up new export opportunities for Indonesia in the African market, considering the growing potential for export opportunities on this continent. This step is in line with efforts to diversify Indonesia's export market and strengthen economic cooperation with countries on the African continent. This effort shows the characteristics of Jokowi's leadership which highlights the importance of concrete economic results from foreign diplomacy, especially for the national economy.

In an interview session with the Senior Diplomat of the Economic Function of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nelson Simorangkir for West Africa, he described how there was a radical change in approach in the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs in the Jokowi era. Where all Ambassadors in all African representatives were directed directly by Jokowi to focus on penetrating the African market. The difference in pragmatic leadership style can also be seen from how Jokowi asked diplomats to make talking points to draft them as briefly as possible and if possible only one page, but in it there is important economic data to be highlighted such as information on Indonesian exports and imports. According to Mr. Simorangkir, Jokowi's leadership style tends to see how Indonesia can encourage exports rather than talking about the romanticism of the Asia-Africa Conference. Therefore, the IAF was formed as a framework for cooperation between Indonesia and African countries (N. Simorangkir, personal communication, May 27, 2025).

#### **4.10. The Actor-Specific Analysis of SBY and Jokowi in Narrating SSC in Africa**

The shift in Indonesia's foreign policy narrative regarding South-South Cooperation (SSC) with Africa can be explained through actor-specific theory, which highlights leadership style, orientation, and psycho-milieu as key factors. The differences between Presidents SBY and Jokowi demonstrate contrasting leadership configurations that have resulted in different foreign policy directions. First, SBY's leadership style was normative, emphasizing universal values such as democracy, human rights, and multilateralism. SSC during the SBY era was used as soft power to assert Indonesia's moral standing among the South. Initiatives such as the Bali Democracy Forum and active participation in the G20 reflect this approach, although its focus is more on the Asian region. In contrast, Jokowi employs a pragmatic and transactional leadership style. SSC is used as a concrete tool to promote domestic development and economic expansion, particularly through infrastructure projects and the expansion of state-owned enterprises into Africa. Second, SBY's leadership orientation is context-driven, responsive to global dynamics, with strategies such as "a million friends, zero enemies." Jokowi is more goal-driven, making SSC an extension of the national development agenda, particularly the Nawa Cita (Nine Priorities).

Third, from a psychological perspective, SBY embodies the reflective and ideological Thinker type, while Jokowi is the pragmatic Doer type, focused on concrete results. This difference explains the shift in the narrative of the SSC: from a moral and historical symbol in the SBY era to a strategic economic tool in

the Jokowi era. Initiatives like the NAASP during SBY's era demonstrated a commitment to multilateralism and the Bandung spirit, while Jokowi emphasized tangible results in South-South cooperation. In contrast, in the Jokowi era, the combination of character as a pragmatic leader, with a goal-driven leadership orientation, and a doer-type psycho-milieu, produces a SSC narrative that is results-oriented, concrete, and economic. Through initiatives such as the Indonesia–Africa Forum (IAF), Jokowi uses SSC no longer as a space for the articulation of ideological solidarity, but as a means of expanding Indonesia's economic interests, especially to support infrastructure projects, expand the BUMN market, and increase foreign investment. IAF reflects a more transactional form of SSC and is in line with the national development agenda. Thus, actor-specific variables, in this case leadership style, leadership orientation and psycho-milieu play a central role in shaping Indonesia's diplomatic orientation towards Africa and SSC in general. The following table illustrates how actor-specific variables influence foreign policy.

**Figure 4.3 Causal Mechanism: A Combination of Leadership Character and Narrative Production of Indonesian SSC in Africa**

<b>Leadership Character Combination</b>	<b>Types of SSC Narratives Generated</b>	<b>Concrete Examples of Policy Platforms</b>
<b>Normative</b> (Leadership Style) + <b>Context-Driven</b> (Leadership Orientation) + <b>Thinker</b> (Psycho-Milieu)	SSC's normative, value-based, historical, and solidarity narrative	<b>NAASP</b> (New Asian-African Strategic Partnership)
<b>Pragmatis</b> (Leadership Style) + <b>Goal-Driven</b> (Leadership Orientation) + <b>Doer</b> (Psycho-Milieu)	SSC's pragmatic, results-oriented, and economic narrative	<b>IAF</b> (Indonesia–Africa Forum)

**Source:** Author's Analysis

## **CHAPTER V CONCLUSION**

### **5.1. Conclusion**

This study shows that the South-South Cooperation (SSC) narrative is inseparable from Indonesia's foreign policy towards Africa. The 1955 Asia-Africa Conference laid the foundation for the SSC, strengthening the solidarity of Southern nations against colonialism and dependence on the West. During the Sukarno era, the SSC served as a platform for the struggle for global justice, driven by a reformist leadership style. However, global dynamics forced subsequent leaders to use the SSC more strategically for the sake of national interests. The New Order era under Suharto marginalized the SSC due to its focus on domestic crises and dependence on the IMF. However, pressure on government legitimacy led to its re-use to demonstrate solidarity with developing countries. Post-Suharto, the leaderships of Habibie, Gus Dur, and Megawati focused more on democratic transition.

The SSC narrative regained strength during the SBY era, particularly during the 50th Asia-Africa Conference in 2005. SBY's normative leadership style emphasized democracy, peace, and justice through a multilateral (intercontinental) approach to disseminate democratic values. This conference gave birth to the NAASP, a strategic partnership between Asia and Africa. However, the NAASP has yet to produce concrete results due to the complexity of member states' interests, its lack of institutional recognition by the African Union, and its over-focus on normative issues such as Palestine.

But in the Jokowi era, Indonesia tends to change its approach in narrating SSC into something more concrete. Indonesia began to use a less complex approach. From before, the SSC narrative was used by SBY in a multilateral context, changing into a bilateral approach that is easier to control. If SBY uses NAASP as an instrument to engage African countries in promoting democracy, then Jokowi uses IAF as a more pragmatic SSC narrative for economic interests.

This study shows that changes in Indonesia's foreign policy behavior in narrating South-South Cooperation (SSC) in Africa are strongly influenced by actor factors, specifically the leadership style, leadership orientation, and psychomilieu type of the head of state. Using an actor-specific theory framework, the analysis demonstrates that the combination of these three variables creates

distinct SSC narrative patterns across leadership periods. In the SBY era, SSC was positioned as an expression of Indonesia's normative power. This normative leadership style, contextual orientation, and thinker-type were reflected in an emphasis on democracy, global south solidarity, and Indonesia's moral role in an inclusive world order. Conversely, in the Jokowi era, SSC has become more pragmatic and results-oriented. This pragmatic leadership style, goal-driven orientation, and doer-type have resulted in the narrative of SSC as an instrument of domestic economic development, including market opening, investment, and infrastructure project expansion. These findings confirm that changes in the direction of Indonesia's SSC policy are not solely explained by international structures but are strongly influenced by the specific actor. This study strengthens the premise of the importance of an actor (leader) in the analysis of Indonesia's foreign policy.

## **5.2. Recommendation**

This study produces several strategic and practical recommendations to strengthen Indonesia's relations with African countries going forward. First, Indonesia needs to formulate a consistent and adaptive SSC narrative, combining normative and pragmatic approaches to ensure the Bandung spirit remains relevant and generates concrete cooperation. Second, institutional coordination must be strengthened between ministries, state-owned enterprises, and the private sector to ensure a more sustainable SSC relationship. Third, economic diplomacy capacity needs to be enhanced. Indonesian diplomats need to be equipped with economic understanding to promote local products and build strategic business networks in Africa. Fourth, investment in public diplomacy is crucial to maintaining SSC norms through student exchanges, technical training, and cultural promotion, thus strengthening solidarity among countries in the Global South.

## **5.3. Suggestions for Further Research**

This study opens up space for further study, by discussing the relationship between an individual's leadership style and foreign policy formulation, especially for developing countries such as Indonesia. Given that so far, the study of foreign policy still tends to be dominated by cases of Western countries, a discussion space is needed to discuss existing foreign policy theories in cases of

developing countries. That way, further research can make comparisons with other developing countries such as India, Brazil and South Africa to see if similar patterns apply.

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