

# **EXAMINING THE DYNAMIC OF INDONESIA'S TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS IN ADVOCATING INDONESIA- ISRAEL RELATIONS**

**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.)**



by:

**Ronaa Nisa'us Sholikhah**

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**UNIVERSITAS ISLAM INTERNASIONAL INDONESIA**

**DEPOK**

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## ABSTRACT

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Why do some transnational actors create and engage in networks that advocate for Indonesia-Israel relations? Previous literature emphasizes that the role of transnational advocacy networks is to legitimize the interests of issues that arise in society. However, transnational actors are indirectly used by third countries to legitimize the relationship between two countries that do not have diplomatic relations. This thesis uses process tracing to see how the dynamics of the role of actors involved in advocating Indonesia-Israel relations. The reason they are involved in the network is because of the common interests with the third country. In this case, there are three important networks in the advocacy: business, minority groups, and Islamic-based. All three are formed by common norms and goals so they have different legitimacy. There are two framings that they use as advocacy strategies, namely alignment and resonance. This strategy takes the form of groups and the use of social media as an alternative to legitimacy. The three networks have different consequences for the community and the government. Legitimacy, which is the foundation of advocacy, does not necessarily have a positive impact on policy change or public opinion. Minority groups are more sustainable due to the strength of connections in the advocacy process than other networks. This is because business networks are more concerned with maintaining relationships for profit. Meanwhile, Islamic-based groups are more fragile because members in the network are individuals and not institutions or organizations.

Keywords: *Transnational Advocacy Network, Role, Legitimacy, and Indonesia-Israel Relationship*

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Problem Statement

Through social dynamics, non-state actors who share the same interests and beliefs can play an important role in mobilizing an emerging issue in society. Because of their common norms, they tend to establish a network (Kadirbeyoglu, 2016; Noakes, 2021). Particularly when it comes to human rights issues, these actors frequently become focal points of change and impact legislation. This network also supports policymakers because the issues raised by them become discourse analysis. International networks are sometimes used by networks based on local social movements to gain resources when they cannot reach the government due to a rift between the two (Keck & Sikkink, 1999). Since these non-state actors utilize global networks to promote their causes, their actions are known as transnational advocacy networks (TANs). Furthermore, this issue does not come from local but international sources, meaning that actors from other nations connect their issues, in what is known as issue networks (Breen & Eilstrup- Sangiovanni, 2023). As a result, this advocacy network analyzes global and local concerns.

Non-state actors utilize various strategies to engage these networks effectively, including resource mobilization (Tarrow, 2005), exerting pressure on governments (Santa Cruz, 2004; Wajner, 2017), influencing public opinion (Carpenter, 2007), and leveraging international organizations (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). They construct these networks by tapping into diverse resources, from local communities sharing their values to global institutions advancing their interests. Keck and Sikkink (1998) illustrate this as a “boomerang pattern”, where entities like NGOs employ international organizations to influence governments. These networks extend beyond governmental pressure, seeking to shape public opinion and mobilize broader support, thereby elevating issues to national significance.

Numerous studies have examined the advocacy strategies utilized by these networks, particularly concerning human rights issues (Carpenter, 2007). Human rights issues are closely related to society rather than the state. So, it is natural that the advocacy process uses a bottom-up and mass-based process because it contributes to society by addressing public opinion and ethnic divides, economic issues, and politics. Even so, it is not uncommon for their activities to be weakened by political patronage (Orjuela, 2003). The dynamic role of civil society is influenced by democracy, nationalism, development, and

international presence in society (Marchetti & Tocci, 2020). Over time, these networks tend to transform into institutionalized NGOs representing the community's interests. These grassroots organizations are typically responsible for pressuring the government and raising awareness about issues affecting the broader community.

However, civil society organizations (CSOs) do not always advocate for the interests of the community but also advocate for the interests of the state because the state utilizes them. The interest of the community comes from the problems that emerge in society. But, the state also utilizes CSOs to pursue its interests. For example, Middle Eastern countries have begun initiating liberal politics in the context of economic crisis. Regimes in Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, and Algeria used the opportunity to form community organizations. Those community organizations can monitor and create collective activities under the auspices of legal codes and practical bureaucracies. However, there is still a debate on whether they are state social control or collective empowerment by the state (Wiktorowicz, 2000). In the transnational context, the role of CSOs can have a major influence on policy change if they take advantage of their alliance with state actors. At least, the alignment of interests and the relative power of contact with the state can produce a strong influence (Pallas & Uhlin, 2014).

State power also seeks to utilize the role of transnational networks to connect two countries that do not have formal diplomatic relations. These non-state actors have a role in advocating and legitimizing the state's interests. For example, NGOs in Israel donate to Palestinian groups due to national interest because they are concerned with the minority group and also for maintaining state security (Haklai, 2008). Legitimation of national interest sometimes reconstructs the view of society that their activities are due to the issues that arise in society. Some TANs also use the legitimacy of society's interests to their national interests (Noakes, 2012). It is normal for political parties to have common interests and beliefs with the community. They use the issues that arise in the community as a political campaign tool (Koss, 2020). The actor that advocates for state interests is not limited to the community but also the elites from political parties or government.

This can be seen in how Israel has used TANs to pursue its interests in Indonesia. Israel has long wanted to have diplomatic relations with Indonesia since it officially became a state. However, this desire has not been realized because Indonesia's policy remains the same, which is not to open diplomatic relations with Israel before Palestine becomes independent. Due to the difficulty of access, Israel uses transnational networks to advocate its agenda in Indonesia. The network consisting of non-state actors then legitimizes various issues that can change public opinion and influence state policies.

Then, why does this paper take the Indonesian case? First, at the governmental level, Indonesia has no formal diplomatic relations with Israel. Indonesia stated in the 1945 Constitution that it consistently seeks to realize world peace based on social justice and humanitarian principles. Indonesia will not open diplomatic relations with Israel until Palestine gains independence. This principle was established from Indonesia's independence when President Soekarno was viewed as anti-semitic due to his socialist ideology (Barton & Rubeinsten, 2005; Yegar, 2006). Several times, President Abdurrahman Wahid wanted to open formal diplomatic ties with Israel, but conservative groups thwarted the plan. Even so, the fourth president updated the Constitution with Ministerial Decree (Kepmen) No. 23/MPP/01/2001 on Jan. 10 2001: trade contacts were legalized, so Indonesia still had relations with Israel through trade channels despite the absence of formal diplomacy.

Second, at the societal level, as a Muslim-majority country, Indonesia supports Palestinian independence, which makes it difficult for Indonesia to build relations with Israel. Demonstrations and public support through donations and voices in the media are solid on this issue. Saiful Mujani Research Center (SMRC) surveyed in 2021 stated that 71 percent of respondents who knew about the conflict stated that Israel was the guilty party. Meanwhile, 3 percent considered Palestine guilty, 5 percent felt both were guilty, and 21 percent did not answer. This high support came from Muslims, namely 74 percent, and 51 percent of non-Muslims stated that Israel was guilty (VOA, 2021). In addition, they have also been solid in influencing foreign policy since the days of President Soeharto (Anwar, 2010). So, the Indonesian people are aware and continue to take part in voicing support for the Palestinian people.

Third, at the geopolitical level, the importance of Indonesia is that currently, almost all Arab countries have normalized their relations with Israel. In 2020, with the help of the United States under President Donald Trump, four countries, namely the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco, normalized relations with Israel. If the total is calculated, that makes six countries with Egypt (1979) and Jordan (1994). The Arab-Israeli conflict is of great concern to Indonesia as a Muslim-majority country. The basis of the country's policy has been to support Palestine on the basis that Israel's occupation of Palestine is illegal (Muttaqien, 2013). So, seeing that many Arab countries have normalized relations with Israel, Indonesia's position becomes important.

This study aims to explain how some groups in Indonesia have a close relationship with Israel with the main agenda being legitimizing the relationship between Indonesia and Israel. We know that Indonesia, as the country with the largest Muslim population in the

world, has a long history of standing up for Palestine. This research provides literature on TANs and social movements that focus on the issue of two countries that have no formal diplomatic relations. The original TAN strategy was to pursue the interest of society. However, scholars rarely use this strategy to analyze groups or even individuals who try to build relations between two countries using state power. These state powers come from another state and are used by civil society to advocate the issue at the local level.

In the context of the case study, this research also provides additional literature on Indonesia- Israel relations, which is rarely studied. I only found a few articles that discuss the relationship because Indonesia tends to support Palestine and rejects any formal diplomatic links with Israel. Literature on Indonesia-Israel is quite crucial because Indonesia has a long history of support for Palestine, a Muslim-majority country. Also, this research uses TANs as a strategic tool to analyze the actors of the pro-Israel lobby in Indonesia. Also, social movements included studying the tactics and strategies used by them.

## **1.2 Research Question**

There are three questions raised in this research. First, why do some actors create and engage in some networks advocating Indonesia-Israel relations? This question focuses on networks formed due to the common goal of advocating for establishing diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Israel. The actors in the network have connections with each other through issues advocated to the government, although not directly. Sometimes, these actors also advocate on issues without seeing others pursuing the same issues to the government and society. This research focuses on the issue network rather than the actors involved.

Second, how do the networks legitimize their agenda? This legitimization process is the tactics and strategies of TANs that seek to advocate for the issue of relations between Indonesia and Israel. Each actor has their network, depending on what issues or motives they bring to the government and society. After grouping the issue networks, this paper will focus on how the actors advocate the issue through framing resonance and alignment. The networks not only advocate for the issue but also try to frame the legitimacy of Indonesia-Israel relations using media. Framing will affect public opinion and change such beliefs and norms in society.

Lastly, what are the consequences of the legitimization? Each tactic and strategy of issue advocacy certainly significantly impacts the government, especially in influencing

policymakers. The impact of the legitimacy and framing does not always change the policy but sometimes contributes to the possibility that shows how the advocacy becomes a consideration in policy making. All responses, negative or positive, from society, are those that impact the legitimacy that networks try to convince. Because, if society keeps talking and discussing the issue that is raised by the networks, it is the impact from the framing that networks try to legitimate. The impact will become the consequence of the sustainability of the networks.

Given the above discussion, this paper looks at how TANs advocate the issue of the possibility of establishing a relationship between Indonesia and Israel. It starts from their motivation to advocate and continues until the impact of what they do. The impact does not focus only on the community's response but also the government's response to make it the basis of policy-making analysis. The different tactics and strategies will also have different impacts and successes. This is because the reasons and motives of the actors in advocating for each issue have their impact, so some are sustainable and even stop. So, this paper will look at the dynamics of transnational networks in advocating for Indonesia-Israel relations.

### **1.3 Research Gap**

I will discuss three aspects of the literature review that form a gap in the research. First, most literature on TANs discusses legitimizing the community's interests. This is because these networks start from an issue that arises and becomes a concern for several parties to help the community, making it a strategic issue among government and society. The advocated issue also becomes material for framing and creating new norms (Carpenter, 2007). Before it becomes a norm that becomes the foundation of society, a group of people are members of a network trying to advocate for their interests to the government. Although the interest is sometimes national, the community considers it part of them (Noakes, 2012). With strong motivation in the community, the process of forming this network becomes a bottom-up rather than a top-down process. This is because the involvement of actors and the formation of the network is analyzed through membership, focus, timing, and strategies (Breen & Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, 2023).

The actors involved are indeed more in the local social movement or focus on the role of the diaspora in the home country (Wajner, 2017; Koinova & Karabegovic, 2016). However, their limited resources to advocate for the government lead them to use transnational networks to influence the policy (Santa Cruz, 2004). This concept has long been developed by Keck and Sikkink (1999), who call it the “boomerang pattern” where non-state actors

use the role of international organizations to pressure the government. Transnational networks mean the relationship or interaction between various activist groups, such as NGOs, international organizations, bureaucrats, student and trade unions, think tanks, human rights movements, lobbies, diaspora groups, academics, religious and ethnic communities, etc. Sometimes, the existence of actors in these networks is a political opportunity structure from which the state is unaware of their interests (Shawki, 2010).

In this case, TANs always focus on the interests of society and are rarely used for state interests. However, TANs are also used for the benefit of the state in some aspects that are sometimes far from the interests of the community itself. Legitimation usually uses state ideology to illustrate the issue's importance, which is the advocacy's purpose (Haklai, 2008). Sometimes, this kind of legitimacy is used by some powerful politicians to succeed in their political campaigns. It is common for state actors to be involved in them (Koss, 2020). Thus, in the literature on TANs, there is still a gap where state interests also often involve these networks. This can be seen in how Israel, which has no voice in the Indonesian government, uses a network of non-state actors to pursue its interests. Because Israel wants to build diplomatic relations with Indonesia.

Second, few articles discuss TANs or transnational activism to analyze pro-Israel activities. This is because the existing literature uses the concept of lobbying rather than the movement itself. Thus, the study of pro-Israel advocates is Western-centric, and was popularized by John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt (2006) in the book *The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy*. In the book, they argue that what makes the United States support Israel is the extraordinary influence of pro-Israel groups and individuals in US domestic politics. Besides the influence of these groups, Lieberman (2009) shows that data on long-term trends in US public opinion show that the Americas have long consistently expressed support for Israel. The case in the US differs from that in European Union politics, where the growth and development of European Christian Zionism illustrate that the mushrooming political-religious movement is part of a 21st-century European trend. Moreover, religion has made progress by positioning itself at the center of EU politics (King, 2016).

In influencing foreign policy, especially in the US, Natan Aridan (2019) tries to define it by taking a case study of US foreign policy. There are at least four types of lobbying carried out by pro-Israel groups and individuals, namely inside lobbying, outside lobbying, ethnic groups, and foreign lobbying. Before Israel received military aid, the US was very unlikely to provide such aid. However, propaganda from pro-Israel groups that formed the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) influenced and persuaded administrations in the

body of politics. Theodore Sasson (2010) says that when support for Israel declined, there was a mass mobilization organized by American Jews. The main tasks carried out by these Jewish organizations are fundraising and political advocacy. The influence of the pro-Israel lobby also has affected politics in US political campaigns. Since 1956, a growing transnational relationship between state and non-state actors has influenced the policy on bilateral issues between the US and Israel (Bick, 2003; Ydringer, 2009; Waxman, 2017). This lobbying activity is only carried out by one large group with an interest, so they lobby the government. However, it does not explain how the network is formed from various groups and mobilized through social movements.

Third, given the lack of a relationship, most studies on Indonesia and Israel primarily focus on how Indonesia is anti-Israel. Yet, despite such anti-Israel rhetoric, some scholars have discussed their relationship from other perspectives outside government institutions. The history of the Jews in Indonesia began during the Dutch colonial period when there were around 3,000 people. Some Jews also promoted the Zionist movement with offices in Bandung, Batavia (Jakarta), Malang, Medan, Padang, Semarang, and Yogyakarta. Since Indonesia became independent and anti-Zionist, they chose to move to Israel. However, some claim to be Buddhists to be accepted in society (Goldstein, 2015). Although there is no official relationship, Indonesia has had relationships with non-state actors since the Soeharto era when it wanted to normalize relations with Israel in 1995. The strong network built by President Wahid paved the way for Indonesia to be wiser in making friendlier decisions (Barton & Rubenstein, 2005; Yegar, 2006). Today, the people-to-people relationship between NGOs on both sides is increasing. In this case, the relationship between educated Muslims, although not a path to diplomatic relations, in the long run, contributes to creating new opinions regarding empathy toward Israel and building good relations with Israel (Eliraz, 2021).

In addition to transnational activities, some literature also mentions advocacy efforts by NGOs for interstate relations between Indonesia and Israel. These communities were established in Wahid's efforts to open diplomacy with Israel for economic interests and to help resolve the Palestinian conflict. One is the emergence of an underground NGO, the Indonesia-Israel Public Affairs Committee (IIPAC) in 2002. This organization is an informal forum for investors and business people to establish cooperation. Research conducted by Putra (2015) only uses a transnational approach and the concept of national interest, which discusses the reasons for establishing NGOs and how the two countries cooperate, especially in business, investment, technology and information, and education. Research also discusses these NGOs in detail in the book *Grand Design Israel di Indonesia*

written by Injilika Hardita (2010). However, Hardita only focuses on business because it uses a political economy approach. This is because Israel's interest in establishing relations with other countries is to expand the country's wealth.

Some literature already discusses Indonesia's relations with Israel, but none of it details the networks. Some only discuss the flow of relations between non-state actors who visit Israel, either through travel agents or for business (Barton & Rubenstein, 2005; Yegar, 2006; Goldstein, 2015; Eliraz, 2021). In addition, some literature only specifically discusses the economic network, which is the main agenda of the relationship between the two countries (Putra, 2015; Hardita, 2010). Even so, there is still a gap where there is a network that connects local people in Indonesia with Israel through grassroots advocacy aimed at influencing foreign policy toward Indonesia's relations with Israel. Not only influencing the policy but also how they try to change public opinion. This can be seen in how, until now, Indonesia has not strictly prohibited access to imports and exports even though it has committed not to have diplomatic relations until Palestine is independent. Thus, this thesis focuses on the Indonesia-Israel network, where it influences foreign policy and changes the domestic and global political order.

#### **1.4 Research Methodology**

This thesis explores how communities and NGOs advocate for an agenda and issue within society and to the government. Therefore, this research uses qualitative methods because it depends on exploring processes, activities, and events and studying the behaviour of specific individuals or groups (Creswell, 2018). This research is based on the participants' words, opinions, thoughts, and feelings. Thus, the consent of the participants for the interview is essential for the research process, and the interview results are the researcher's responsibility.

Because this research wants to dig deeper into how transnational networks that advocate for the Israel-Indonesia relationship grew in Indonesia, it uses a descriptive qualitative approach to analysis. In addition, this research uses explicit process tracing to study causal mechanisms in a single case. Process tracing seeks to make in-case conclusions about the presence or absence of a causal mechanism in a single case study (Beach & Pedersen, 2019). In this case, the researcher used periodicity to analyze the growth of the pro-Israel lobby's social network in Indonesia.

To discover how some actors emerged in Indonesia, this research used critical juncture to explain the experimental, mechanism-based, and eventful aspects of historical causal

analysis (Slater & Simmons, 2010). This critical event is not the best explanation, rather than following the long history before this critical point as a form of causal explanation of the research. Indonesia had a close relationship with Israel long before the propaganda happened. This research uses the history of when Wahid became president and networked with various actors to launch their mission to build diplomatic relations with Israel. When the mission failed, it is the actors in the network who carried on.

### **Case Study**

Indonesia was chosen because it is unique compared with other countries with a history of Israeli networks. For example, Burma and Indonesia have the same experience with the presence of Jews in Rangoon and Surabaya. However, Burma did not question it because it had diplomatic relations with Israel after its independence (Goldstein, 2015). In addition, despite Indonesia being the largest Muslim-majority country, Malaysia is more strongly opposed to Israel than Indonesia. Its decision to oppose Israel was because Islam is also the official religion there, unlike Indonesia, which has the Pancasila ideology and accepts diversity but does not recognize the Jewish religion (Alatas, 2020). Thus, Indonesia was chosen as the study area for the transnational pro-Israel lobby network case study.

### **Data collection**

This research is based on primary and secondary sources. For primary sources, this thesis conducted a two-month field study to examine Indonesia's dynamic transnational network that advocates for the Indonesia-Israel relationship. During the research process, we interviewed key informants and focused on advocacy in Indonesia. Furthermore, in implementing the emergence of the actors who pursue Indonesia-Israel relations, we interviewed the founders of NGOs and some related institutions. In the interview process, we used a semi-structured interview because there was the potential for new questions after receiving answers from the sources and the questions we had already given. For secondary sources, we collected data from the literature, books, journals, magazines, newspapers, laws, websites, and other written data that are appropriate to the discussion.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 The Dynamic between TANs and Third-Party State Interests**

This theoretical framework will examine how TANs mobilized to pursue state interests. Due to globalization, people's interactions foster connections and facilitate the formation of networks, addressing economic and scientific matters across nations. Such networking significantly impacts policymaking, as actors within these networks are deeply invested in exploring issues that unite them. Their shared values and goals drive collaborative efforts toward common objectives (Noakes, 2021; Kadirbeyoglu, 2016). This collective purpose also enables them to influence social and cultural norms through transnational, regional, and domestic networks. These networks address issues of global importance, shedding light on changes in world politics. According to Keck and Sikkink (1999), the activities of these non-state actors extend beyond mere advocacy, shaping policy changes through TANs. These networks introduce new ideas that challenge existing norms, sparking discourse in policy debates. Moreover, the norms they promote serve as vital information for both domestic and international governments.

In this paper, we conceptualize why TANs support state interests because state interests align with their interests. The interests of the community and the state are not too different. It depends on who benefits from the advocacy activity. Sometimes, the transnational network tries to indirectly advocate for the community's interests through framing or for the community itself. For example, the free Tibet movement, created because foreign policy appeared to neglect it. This network is transnational because it tries to enter the international sphere to advocate its interests at the United Nations and liberate the Tibetan people (Noakes, 2012). State actors are often involved due to the thin line of interest between the community and the state. Usually, they are elites in charge of policy and as members of parties that share the same vision as the non-state actor network (Koss, 2020). To achieve this goal, non-state actors within the network play a crucial role in shaping the issue. These actors encompass individuals or institutions dedicated to advocating for the cause. Primarily comprising international and domestic NGOs, research and advocacy organizations, the media, foundations, churches, trade unions, sections of regional and international intergovernmental bodies, and local social movements (Keck & Sikkink,

1999), this network often intersects with domestic politics, drawing involvement from state actors aligned with the advocacy but not necessarily representing the government itself. These actors, whether state or non-state, coalesce around shared norms rather than governmental affiliations (Koss, 2020). While each actor may have distinct goals, their shared values foster connections, forming a complex web of networks. Thus, TANs are not singular entities but rather a convergence of multiple networks united by common norms. In addition to globalization, these networks use transnational actors because the relationship between domestic groups and their governments is disconnected and hindered, so conflict resolution requires international actors to influence the policies of their domestic governments. Keck and Sikkink (1999) call this the “boomerang pattern” where NGOs can directly seek international allies to exert pressure on the state from outside. The task of these transnational actors is to advocate by persuading audiences, political elites, and decision-makers. There are three types of actors: “norm entrepreneurs” or those promoting norms through activism, “gatekeepers” or organizations that centralize and produce norms, and “like-minded states” or government sectors willing to translate them into political action. In international issues, TANs can influence foreign policy as conflict resolution (Wajner, 2017). In addition, these networks also emerge because they believe in shared norms and goals and can actively promote them.

Domestic networks and opportunities that let people closely link and grow up are called transnational activists because they transform domestic politics and society. Tarrow defined them as “rooted cosmopolitans”. This is because there is diffusion of movements across borders, as scholars have said about historical transnationalism. They have long defined social collective action as international mobilization that observes the adaptation of the forms and the framing of collective action. Most recently, Tarrow has found that their activities incentivize and focus collective action through transnational coalitions and campaigns by providing more comprehensive resources and opportunities. Transnational activities are caused by globalization, where there are no barriers between citizens of one country and another. This globalization deepens interstate relations and sometimes as international economic integration has resources, alternative targets, provides opportunities for transnational activists. They can also make claims against other domestic and external actors (Tarrow, 2005). Transnational activism can mobilize members when they get an opportunity from globalization and deeper interstate relations.

When discussing how local social movements greatly influence TANs, we should not forget about the role of the diaspora. Their role in symbolic politics and expanding claim-making from local to national is also great because it is one of the tactics and strategies in

the TAN. There are at least four stages of the diaspora mobilization process, namely (1) after local political opportunities open up in the homeland, then initiatives from the diaspora will emerge and spread throughout the transnational network, (2) coordination of activities through NGOs carried out transnationally, (3) the initiative is contextualized according to political circumstances in different host countries, depending on opportunities, and (4) existing claims change from the national level to the supranational level (Koinova & Karabegovic, 2016).

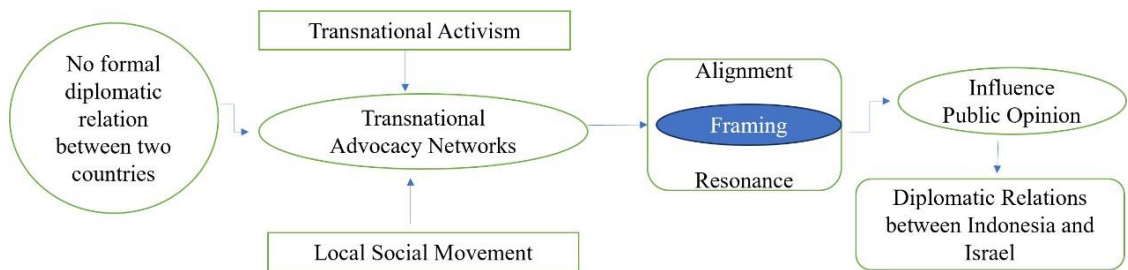
Their connection to the third party state interest gives the impression they are mobilized by them. This transnational network is basically from civil society and forms an NGO. In a democratic country, their role is to control the state. In a new country, their role is often used by the state to help the process of developing the economy and the state system. The state deliberately forms groups and organizations that function as a support mechanism for the state. Frolic (2015) calls this "state-led civil society". Like countries in the Middle East when hit by an economic crisis, the state deliberately mobilizes civil society and forms a group that is embedded in the bureaucratic process and legal code. What should be state control, civil society is co-opted by the state for its benefit (Wiktorowicz, 2000).

Transnational networks primarily involve non-state actors and international organizations collaborating to advance their objectives. These networks emerge when local governments lack ties with domestic groups, prompting the latter to seek advocacy channels through their international connections. The formation of such networks hinges on shared norms and values, facilitating concerted efforts to address specific issues of public concern, with a predominant focus on human rights. Typically, these issues gain traction within communities before being adopted by transnational networks, often shaped by media framing and influencing public opinion (Carpenter, 2007). Advocacy within these networks' centers on community interests, with attention also paid to societal dynamics such as democracy, nationalism, development, and international relations, which can spark conflicts (Marchetti & Tocci, 2020). Consequently, TANs are closely aligned with community interests rather than the state's.

However, a transnational network can also advocate for the interests of a country that does not have diplomatic relations. For example, what is done by transnational Jewish philanthropy is an effort to advocate for the state's interests. This is because they donate to Palestinian NGOs in Israel, as we know that the relationship between the two countries is not good. However, donating aims to strengthen the state of Israel in the scope of society, which can affect the country's security. The donations can also create an equal society because the network cares about minorities (Haklai, 2008). Like the Jewish network in

Israel, the transnational network in Brazil consisting of the Arab and Palestinian diaspora also helps the country build its relationship with Palestine. This is because countries more inclined to US policies tend to find it difficult to conduct diplomatic relations with Palestine. However, with the power of advocacy carried out by the transnational network, the two countries can build diplomatic relations (Wajner, 2017).

Those difficulties in enhancing the relationship make the strategy of transnational networks to advocate such an agenda in the host state important. For example, the conflict in Bosnia Herzegovina made diaspora actors very important in transitional justice and peacebuilding. Diaspora mobilization involves transnational, trans-local, host state, and homeland influencing issues. To achieve the role of the diaspora, they should be engaged, involved, reactive, and inactive in the advocacy agenda (Karabegovic, 2017). In addition, TANs are used to enhance South-South cooperation, an example of which is the role of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS). They call them South-South Transnational Advocacy Networks (SSTANs), (Shipton & Dauvergne, 2021; Moreira et al., 2019).



**Figure 1.** Model of how transnational advocacy networks influence public opinion.

The state uses these transnational networks to legitimize its agenda in other countries due to the lack of diplomatic relationships. The networks are not direct relations but indirect. Thus, the state utilizes non-state actors to advocate for policymakers and influence public opinion. So, the role of TANs in pressuring the government, mass mobilization, and changing public opinion is very large in addition to their primary task of pursuing its agenda with the government.

## 2.2 Conceptualizing Typology Actors of TANs

As discussed in the theoretical framework, TANs indirectly have been used by third-party states due to a lack of diplomatic relations. We conceptualize the networks into three approaches: business, religion, and moderate Islam. The three approaches have

characteristics that legitimize their interests in some countries. In this case, the characteristics that we will explain focus on who the actors involved are, the relationship between the actors in the network, and finally, the legitimacy used by the actors as a motivation to build the network. These characteristics conceptualize the role of actors in TANs.

First, business networks exist in the dynamic of TANs. Business networks comprise two or more interconnected business partnerships, each of which is managed by a group of players. Furthermore, there is reciprocity between them in addition to interaction (Anderson et al., 1994; Holm et al., 1996). A relationship that develops into a more or less ongoing process of communication and reciprocity between two business relationships is necessary to build a strong network. Four traits characterize business relationships: context dependence, mutuality, process nature, and long-term nature. At least when it comes to corporate relationships, structure—which includes links, affiliations, connections, and institutional bonds—is just as important as profit and loss. Social relations are also crucial in building business relationships (Holmlund & Törnroos, 1997). So, the relationship between businesses is essential in building business networks.

Three things are necessary for any business relationship: actors, actions, and resources. When the three elements are practical—that is, when actors are mutualistic, activities are linked together, and resources are heterogeneous—the network performs its main role (Anderson et al., 1994). Actors in companies that concentrate on production operations are actors in the business network. Resource actors also include the banking, technology, and marketing sectors. In the meantime, human players concentrate on knowledge to grow the company (Holmlund & Törnroos, 1997).

Because family relationships have a significant coordinating element due to their ties in ethnic and regional affiliations, business actors might involve them in the context of worldwide networks. Furthermore, mutual cultural norms foster trust (Casson & Cox, 1993). Consequently, the primary drivers of business network development are nationality and ethnicity (Haggerty & Haggerty, 2010). Actors in commercial connections are motivated to establish a strong network by shared rules and values.

The benefit of networks in business relationships is the sustainability of exchanges made by actors. The basic assumption of economic theory is that each individual is selfish and focuses on maximizing profits. However, expensive transaction costs make them rethink, making networking the right step to build profitable business relationships. So, altruism becomes a practical step because it typically differentiates from selfish norms. Most firms are family groups, making building business networks easier (Casson & Cox, 1993). Firms

that consist of small social groups require strong mutuality. Mutuality in the business network is essential for the development of interfirm systems. In addition, mutuality can also form a value they believe in together (Holm et al., 1999). Value is indirectly formed because of the relationship between business relationships.

Second, extensive religious networks are also used by states that have common beliefs with other states. They are a minority group in some countries. This network is formed because of the large role of religion formed by collective identities and immigrant communities. For example, Africans who immigrated to Europe also brought their religious identity. Thus, the influence of this common norm in religion forms a global communications network. As immigrants and, at the same time, a minority in a region, maintaining identity becomes a common obligation. The network they form aims at maintaining identity and ensuring security. In addition, this network is also used to respond to various issues regarding religion, culture, politics, economy, and social affairs. They network by joining several groups to form a varied network. Through their religious identity and spiritual fulfillment, they need to feel at home rather than as strangers (Adogame, 2003). The need for security reinforces this religious network because they are scattered in various regions. Transnational religious networks are reciprocal relationships between faith groups influenced by global engagement. However, these networks often form strongly in regions where religion is dominant. Those with a sense of mutuality support each other and help the religious tradition to exist. This is similar to the purpose of building religious networks to maintain identity. Being transnational means they should compromise with other cultures, politics, religions, and societies in which they live. So, they commonly provide financial and human support for education, health, housing, and agriculture. This network is for members and seeks to impact an area's development positively. This potential is formed because of the strong religious identity that sometimes has strong authority in an area (Kinney, 2015). Not only do they strive to maintain identity, but they also strive to play a large role in the efficacy of civil society. That way, the network also has an impact on the development of the region.

Religious networks are not always formed by just one religion but by multiple religious congregations sharing the same values. They consistently meet to organize for the same purpose. In addition to common goals, they are also formed because of strong social capital and how to promote social justice from the role of religion itself (Todd, 2012). Even with this common goal, the role of religious networks is stronger than social position or personal dependency. This is because the network members do not just want to be pious but also contribute to societal changes. This network is formed due to cultural similarities between

individuals despite different religions. The roots of culture and interpersonal networks in religion significantly impact the influence of these networks on society (Himmelstein, 1989). So, multiple actors formed due to common goals are also a factor in forming religious networks.

Third, Islamic-based networks also influence discussions about Indonesia's possible relations with Israel. To see this network, we must first understand why the term moderation exists. Some Muslim countries led by authoritarian governments make dogma and interpretation radical. They also try to intimidate and marginalize moderate Muslims. The distinction between moderation and radicals or extremists became clearer after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, which distinguished that moderates are kinder and radicals are worse. In addition, there is the influence of the Cold War, where the US pursued democracy and approached Muslim countries by using counter-terrorism issues (Rabasa, 2007; Cherney & Murphy, 2016). With the counter-terrorism program, the interfaith relations program emerged through the dialogue process.

Interfaith relations connect different religions more closely using a local cultural approach. Thus, interfaith relations can also be said to be intercultural awareness. This relationship connects theology and human science because it involves social relations. Establishing strong relationships and interfaith programs requires intercultural activities to adjust urban history and sociological aspects. Usually, these interfaith activities use the principle of dialogue conducted by local communities because it involves local culture (Michael, 2012). This dialogue negotiates the middle direction by reflecting intensity to maintain difference. This dialogue is also a step toward mutual understanding of each culture and tradition (Williams & Ruparell, 2014). So, this moderate network is important for building a dialogue with different religions and cultures to provide mutual understanding as material for reflection.

The members of this network are quite diverse, but the majority focuses on organized religious bodies or local congregations. They also usually come from NGOs or part of the local or national state, either as participants, partners, or even organizers (Orton, 2016). In addition, the actors involved in this network constitute an international database of partners, including individuals, organizations, groups, institutions, parties, etc. Social sectors such as liberal and secular Muslim academics and intellectuals have an open mind instead of being conservative Muslims. There is also the role of moderate journalists and writers engaged in gender equality campaigns. Community activists and young moderate religious scholars are also actors in the network (Rabasa, 2007). Actors in this moderation do not

focus on religious actors but also on individuals or groups with open minds that allow for dialogue.

Type of Actor	Characteristics of Networks
Business	Family relationship Collective actor Sustainability of the reciprocity
Minority Group	Maintaining identity Ensuring security Multiple religious congregations
Islamic-Based	Interfaith relations Principles of dialogue International database of partners

**Table 1.** Typology Actor and Characteristics of Networks.

### 2.3 Framing as Strategy of Advocacy

Before framing appears, a problem makes an issue emerge and become a matter of public discussion. However, little literature focuses on the emergence of this issue, so there is a new discussion of TANs. Carpenter (2007) says that they only focus on the transnational role in setting the agenda while not paying attention to explaining the issue itself. Norm entrepreneurship should focus on the dynamic of the emergence of the issue. According to him, this issue's emergence can explain how TANs play a role in world politics. He also illustrates how issue emergence starts from the emergence of a problem so that a definition emerges. Even so, problems that do not give rise to definitions will not appear as an issue. In addition, there must be an issue adoption if you want to raise an issue emergence. However, if it only stops at defining an issue and no one takes care of it, it will stop there. If the issue has reached the emergence stage, then advocacy emerges. However, advocacy that does not campaign stops between non-state actors and policymakers. To create a new norm, the campaign itself is necessary. Thus, the explanation of how world politics changes is complete because of this process.

TANs have much to do with transforming societal norms and values, so framing becomes an important issue in social construction. Keck and Sikkink (1999) refer to David Snow to explain framing as a strategy. There are two types of framing here, namely frame alignment

and frame resonance. Frame alignment is a framing that can organize experiences individually and collectively. In addition, this framing can also guide action. In this case, frame alignment can also build networks or combine one network with another. They are united in the same frame. Meanwhile, frame resonance focuses more on relationships between organizations and how they influence public understanding. Because of the focus on framing an issue, transnational networks usually have a small number of activists and rarely engage in mass-based mobilization. Even so, it does not rule out the possibility that actors can be from mass mobilizations if they engage in mass protests. That way, TANs can be called grassroots movements (Wajner, 2017).

Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow (2000) have developed a concept of the effect of the framing process in social movements. This process is called collective action frames. They define “collective action frames as action-oriented sets beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaign of social movement organization (p. 614)”. There are at least three stages in framing before actors do it: diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational. Diagnostic here is closely related to the framing of injustice where actors capture the context in society. The prognostic process tries to offer problem-solving so that the actors form a group that aims to solve the problem. Once both are formed, actors have the motivation to advocate for the issue.

Framing does not offer a specific impact because its goal is to create a culture of the new norms that the actors bring. Even so, in TANs, there is efficacy to measure how influential the strategies carried out by actors in advocating for a policy are. Zeynep Kadirbeyoglu (2016) conceptualized a feature of TANs that can measure their effectiveness. Four things must be done by actors, namely extensity, which includes a variety of actors; intensity, which measures the frequency of exchanges; patterns, which measure the closeness of institutional and regulatory relationships; and the last is the areas of impact. Because TANs have a goal, their success is measured through exchanging information, pressure, and advocacy results.

Efficacy framing carried out by TANs strengthens NGOs regarding organization and resource mobilization because it is key in framing resonance with policymakers. In addition, this professionalization framing is also a step for TANs in non-democratic countries. Pressuring the government is not enough through framing strategies that result from mere interpretation but depend on the political context and competition between framings (Norman, 2017). Even so, not all advocacy that uses framing is always successful and influences government policy. However, framing done by structured and coordinated anti-large dam organizations will significantly influence the success of framing rather than

expanding democratic space (Leong, 2007). Thus, framing resonance cannot influence government policy if it is not matched by framing alignment, where networks are strengthened and well-institutionalized.

## 2.4 Research Argument

Given the theoretical framework, we argue that the state has used TANs to pursue its interests. TANs always carry a mission to be able to change a country's policies and people's views. This is because the purpose of forming the network starts from an issue they want to advocate to the government to become a law or policy. They are called transnational networks because they advocate for policies that concern international issues, so the actors involved are not only from local social movements but also transnational activism. Although this network is formed from societal issues, these actors are also used to advocate for the state's interests. The goal is not only to change a policy but to legitimize and frame it so that it can change people's views on the issue.

Scope of Condition	Framing the Issue	Impact on the government and society
Advocacy of the relationship between Indonesia and Israel (landscape of advocacy strategy and actors)	Alignment and resonance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Strong</li> <li>● Weak</li> </ul>	Influence public opinion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● High</li> <li>● Low</li> </ul>

**Figure 2.** The hypothesis of how the impact on the government and society is based on framing the issue.

The absence of diplomatic relations between the two countries is a reason for a state to utilize transnational networks consisting of non-state actors to pursue state interests. These actors form a network based on a personal or collective experience that guides their actions. Framing that is formed based on this experience is called framing alignment. Meanwhile, framing resonance is the relationship between organizations that influence public views. We also argue that advocating for state interests using framing alignment and resonance will influence state policy decision-making.

## CHAPTER 3

### FINDING AND DISCUSSION (1)

#### 3.1 Overview of Indonesia-Israel Relations

In terms of formal state-to-state relations, Indonesia has always been firm in not establishing relations with Israel. However, the country's elites have had several informal meetings with the Israeli government. Even during the President Suharto era, there was a purchase transaction of Skyhawk aircraft and 11 helicopters in 1979. There was also an agreement between Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Suharto to normalize the country's relations with trade networks in 1995. Despite the absence of formal diplomacy, Greg Barton and Rubenstein (2005) say that the flow of people-to-people trade relations between Israel and Indonesia has steadily increased since the Oslo DoP in 1993. The strong network built by President Abdurrahman Wahid paved the way for the country to be wiser and make friendlier decisions. However, he did not stop anti-semitic propaganda. So, this clearly illustrates that Indonesia's relationship with Israel has been slowly nurtured through state-to-state networks but has always been limited by anti-semitic and pro-Zionist propaganda among the public (Yegar, 2006).

Wahid's relationship with Israel began in 1994 when he accepted an invitation to witness Israel's new treaty with Jordan. He was accompanied by Djohan Effendi to Jerusalem and toured Israel. After returning from Israel, he recommended that the government investigate the possibility of opening diplomatic relations with the country. However, at that time, he received much criticism from many parties, especially Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) (Barton, 2020; Rifai, 2014). His argument influenced his re-election as the NU executive board (PBNU) chairman because it represented NU itself (Van Dijk, 1996). In 1999, Wahid was elected president by the parliamentary election. One of his main programs was improving relations with Israel. Three days after the inauguration, Wahid went to Bali to attend the International Business Conference and expressed his desire to open diplomatic relations with Israel. The reason at that time was to follow what was done by Arab countries and show that Indonesia was a moderate country even though it was led by a kyai (Umar, 2016). Alwi Shihab was deliberately appointed as a foreign minister of Arab descent to negotiate in front of all the ambassadors of Arab countries he invited after the president's inauguration. He covered up their suspicions at that time by emphasizing his concern for Palestine (Barton, 2020).

Although Wahid was very close to Israel, his desire to build diplomacy with that nation had to fail. This was because he was under tremendous pressure from the right wing in Indonesia. One was his failure to meet Israeli PM Ehud Barak during his trip to Jordan, which continued to Kuwait and Qatar. They said that his failure was because his visit was considered disrespectful because it took place in Jordan. The relationship between Jordan and Israel then was quite good (Barton, 2020). Even so, until the end of his leadership, he visited many delegations from Israeli government agencies, such as the directors general of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In addition, he also visited events organized by pro-Israel groups such as the American Jewish Committee (AJC) and The Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council (AIJAC) (Barton & Rubenstein, 2005). Due to intense pressure from the right, Wahid relented until a more favorable opportunity arose (Barton, 2020).

Although Wahid's wish failed, he left a regulation that perpetuated Indonesia's relations with Israel through informal channels through Ministerial Decree No. 23/MPP/01/2001 dated January 10, 2001 (Akbar, 2013). In addition, he also revoked Presidential Decree No. 264/1962 and issued Presidential Decree No. 69/2000, where freemasonry and other organizations became official and legal again in Indonesia (Artawijaya, 2010). With this freedom, Israel indirectly networked with non-state actors transnationally to continue to approach Indonesia. These transnational actors tried to legitimate the potential of relations between Indonesia and Israel. The issue will be explained in the following subsections.

### **3.2 Transnational Advocacy Networks in Indonesia-Israel Relations**

This chapter will explain how the dynamics of actors connected through issue networks legitimized the interests of Indonesia-Israel relations. This network is transnational because it connects two state interests. Even so, the actors involved are not from the government elite, but non-state actors through NGOs from both countries. Mapping the actors in this transnational network is essential to see why they advocate for the state's interests. Their motivations in the network appear to have common interests with the state they advocate for. So, this mapping will make it easier to see what issues they legitimize.

After mapping the actors involved in the advocacy network, we will then discuss the legitimacy they offer to the government and society. The legitimacy will be divided into three essential parts according to the interests of the network, namely business, minority group, and Islamic-based. Although each network has specific interests, the legitimacy offered is not limited to these interests. This is because the interests of the three networks

are the same, namely pursuing Indonesia-Israel relations although through different approaches. This legitimacy mapping is based on the interests of the network itself.

The Israeli government attempts to mobilize transnational networks through Hasbara propaganda. The technique is that the Israeli government invites several journalists, politicians, key opinion leaders, and NGO activists to visit Israel. In addition, the Hasbara Fellowship also invites students around the world to attend Israeli advocacy training (Deduktif.id, 2024). The mobilization process resulted in several new groups in Indonesia that actively voiced Israel's interests after returning from visits to Israel. All members in the advocacy network, such as businesses, minority groups, and Islamic-based groups have been invited or visited Israel. However, not all of them have voiced Israel's interests. Islamic-based groups use the engagement process with Israel to voice Palestinian interests.

### **3.2.1 Business Network**

Indonesia's business relations with Israel began with the government elite during the Suharto era. At that time, Indonesia conducted Skyhawk aircraft and helicopter transactions in 1979. Seeing the business potential that benefited both countries, in 1995, Suharto and PM Rabin agreed to establish relations between the two countries to establish trade networks. In addition, President Wahid also fully supported this potential due to his close ties with Israel. However, the conservatives continuously opposed the plan to normalize relations (Barton & Rubenstein, 2005). Since the elites had paved the way for potential trade relations, non-state actors slowly emerged and built business networks in both countries.

#### **Actor and their Networks**

The actors involved in the business network between Indonesia and Israel are quite diverse; some are from the government elite. Not all these actors are interested in opening diplomatic relations between the two countries. Most of these actors are only involved in business transactions and do not get involved in political affairs. This business network has a mutual collective actor, so the orientation of the relationship between them is aimed at mutual benefit. It is not uncommon for political affairs to interfere with business network affairs, and often, one party cuts off trade relations because it does not want to lose money. Israel's approach in this business network deliberately takes the role of transnational actors to maintain good relations with Indonesia.

The first institution that emerged in Indonesia was the Indonesia-Israel Public Affairs Committee (IIPAC), founded by Nur Hamid Ketang, or Benjamin Ketang as he is known. His closeness to President Wahid led him to meet the Israeli government elite. The institution was formed because Ketang was part of the Indonesia-Israel international negotiation team in 2001. That year, he first visited Israel and met Foreign Minister Shimon Peres to discuss project opportunities in Indonesia. His meeting with Peres also included a letter from Wahid. After receiving support from many parties, Ketang and his friends established IIPAC, which concentrated on business lobbying (Wirawan, 2019).

The organisation also received recommendations from the Australian Israel and Jewish Affairs Council (AIJAC) and the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). The IIPAC network utilized international resources because local capacity was insufficient to build an institution in Indonesia (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). This is because this network was the first to emerge and advocate for the interests of Indonesia-Israel relations.

The purpose of IIPAC is to organize cooperation with Israeli institutions and international Jews and protect the rights of Jewish citizens and Jewish descendants in Indonesia. The small number of Jews and the negative sentiment in society made it necessary for this network to protect their rights (Adogame, 2023). In addition, as mentioned above, this non-governmental organization wants to promote business cooperation, investment, information and technology, and higher education. Thus, its activities revolve around business cooperation, international trade, and investment through national and international companies. Those involved in such business dealings are administratively authorized as members of IIPAC. In addition, the organization also conducts research and development activities aimed at community empowerment. Although IIPAC aims to build a business network, its main mission is to propagandize the issue of Israel in Indonesia, especially in the economic field.

As an institution with an international Jewish network, IIPAC members are also expected to be active and participate in international conferences organized by Jewish institutions. The IIPAC Protocol states that they follow the activities of AIPAC, the organization that provides recommendations and support for them. In addition, there is the Shimon Peres Foundation, the Peres Center for Peace and Innovation, because of Ketang's close relationship with the foreign minister. The organization develops and implements programs for people of all ages, religions, and backgrounds. They also participate in the Open Society Foundations, a US-based grantmaking network. Business magnate George Soros founded it and aims to advance justice, education, independent media, and public health by financially supporting civil society groups. A solid Jewish network, they are also involved

in the activities of AJEEC-NISPED (Arab-Jewish Center for Empowerment, Equality, and Cooperation - Negev Institute for Strategies of Peace and Economic Development). The organization, founded in 2000, aims to work together to build equality and a shared society and enable Arabs and Jews to coexist while preserving their identity and culture (Hardita, 2010).

The NGO was inaugurated in Jakarta on January 21, 2002. However, there is no exact information on who runs the institution besides Ketang. That year, Ketang got the opportunity to study at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, majoring in Jewish Civilization, as recommended by Peres. Before being active in lectures, Ketang studied Hebrew for two years, so he could only finish his lectures in 2006. After returning from Israel in 2007, he was appointed executive director of IIPAC and began developing it with his friends. They lobbied to get investments from Israel accepted by entrepreneurs in Indonesia underground. Despite the underground movement, IIPAC's development was rapid, with branches in eight provinces. In addition, many offered to become members.

Although IIPAC was inaugurated in Jakarta, the office is domiciled on Jalan Imam Bonjol No. 08 Krajan, Tamansari, Wuluhan, Jember Regency, East Java. Ketang, from Jember, deliberately placed the office there to anticipate security. Even so, IIPAC still has an office in an unknown location in Jakarta. Oryza A. Wirawan said, "Jember residents tend not to care about other people's business, so the office is safer" (personal communication, March 7, 2024). This is because if it is openly located in Jakarta, it will be easy for government officials to ban or follow up on the movement immediately. In addition, during the activities in Jember, there were never any direct demonstrations, even though the local security forces continuously monitored the activities. This is to prevent conservative groups, such as the Islam Defenders Front (FPI) and NU, committing acts of repression. The condition of Jember is almost the same as Madura. Prominent local NU leaders hold the management of the FPI, so the two can merge (Hamdi, 2013).

During his activities in Jember, Ketang involved his closest friends and neighbors who were active in community groups. The IIPAC members in Jember were the youth of Taman Sari village and numbered in the dozens. The activities carried out were in the form of community empowerment, such as fisheries and livestock groups that were successful at that time. The members utilize Ketang because he has a vast network to get donations. Because Ketang is actively connected to networks from Australia, America, and Israel, it is easy to get donors for the benefit of the youth group. In addition, Ketang himself made all the documents, such as the company profile. Soponyono, one of the members of IIPAC,

said, “All the documents were taken care of by him. We just accept and run this community” (personal communication, March 8, 2024).

However, the IIPAC office has been inactive since 2017 due to Ketang's illness. In 2019, the director and founder of IIPAC passed away, and there was no one to carry on. Since then, there has been no more news or news related to the activities carried out by the NGO. In order to survive, networks must have both professional incentives and norms about issues governed by the organization. Professionals here are members who seek to control issues and network management (Henriksen & Seabrooke, 2016). However, IIPAC has neither, so the network built by IIPAC is stalled and unsustainable.

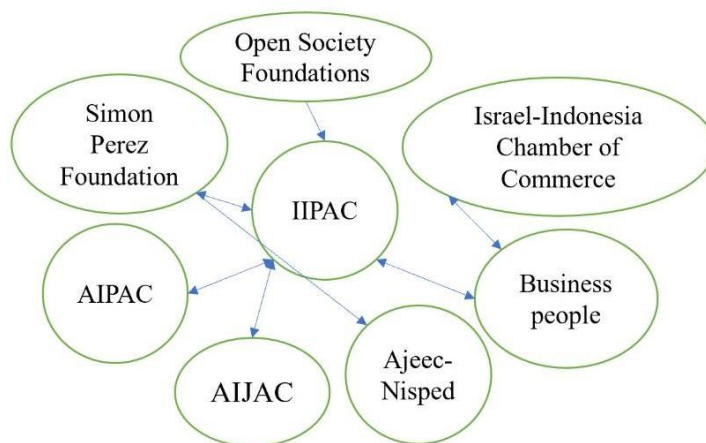
So far, the Indonesia-Israel Chamber of Commerce is still centered in Singapore because there is no diplomatic relationship. However, in 2009, one of the non-state actors from Israel established the Israel-Indonesia Chamber of Commerce based on NGOs. This institution originated from the closeness of the Indonesian government to the Israeli government, which was not known by the public. This relationship was proven during a transaction during Suharto's time. The Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Kadin) visited Israel in 2006 to fulfil invitations from the Manufacturers Association of Israel (MAI) and the Israel Export and International Cooperation Institute (ICI). M. S. Hidayat also signed a trade cooperation with Israel (Hardita, 2010). So, it is not surprising that Emanuel Shahaf, the founder of the NGO, took the opportunity to build a business network between the two countries.

Apart from the closeness at the government level, the organization originated from private business relations from Israel in Indonesia and China. This is because many business people in Indonesia are ethnic Chinese. This business network began around the 17th and 18th centuries, as evidenced by the existence of arms supplies when Indonesia was at war in East Timor. Strong relationships with prominent business people in China developed in Indonesia (Rachman, 2022). The impact of this vital business relationship generated more than a billion dollars. Moreover, Indonesia has extensive natural resources, such as the promising coal business. So, the purpose of establishing the Israel-Indonesia Chamber of Commerce is to bridge Israeli companies that want to develop their business relations in Indonesia. This is because Shahaf has a strong network in Indonesia.

Because there are no diplomatic relations with Indonesia, Israel uses Taiwan Solutions to propose the chamber of commerce. This is because Israel also does not have relations with Taiwan (Sobol, 2019). After all, they have close relations with China. So, Israel has an office for economic interests because it has good trade relations with Taiwan. What is done with Taiwan is also the same as what is done in Indonesia because there are economic

interests and strong business networks. The chamber of commerce initiated by Shahaf only focuses on Israel's interests in Indonesia, which helps introduce Indonesia's wealth to Israeli companies.

The actors involved in the chamber of commerce are mostly private businessmen with economic interests in both countries. Because the development of trade between the two countries is between \$300 million and \$500 million annually, the potential of this business is very promising (Akbar, 2013). Even so, there are very few members from Indonesia. Shahaf said, "They are more conservative in taking risks than business people from Israel". Despite the name of the chamber of commerce, the actors in this network are run mainly by business people. The rest of the government actors are only representatives, such as the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Finance.



**Figure 3.** Business Networks in Indonesia-Israel Relations

Actors in the business network are pretty diverse, and the majority are involved because of business and economic interests. If traced, the economic network was formed long before the political interests of Indonesia's relationship with Israel. Especially the network that was formed between Israel and ethnic Chinese so that it developed in Indonesia. In addition, these economic interests also involve the Indonesian people, especially in the agriculture and fisheries groups in Jember. They are involved because they get donations to run their business affairs efficiently. All actors in the business network, as well as the government elite, are concerned with the sustainability of their well-established business with Israel. However, this business network is so individualized that the network ended when the leading actor died.

### **Legitimation**

For their interests to be accepted by the Indonesian government and society, actors in this business network use advocacy by offering various narratives. This is because the sustainability of their networks is essential for economic interests, both for themselves, their companies, and their countries. So, it is unsurprising that many actors actively voice their media interests to be accepted in society. In addition, the approach through the alliance of community groups is also carried out so that the Indonesian people can accept Israel's interests. Legitimacy in Israel's business network with Indonesia is not far from the national interests embraced by the Indonesian people.

The business network offers three legitimations to pursue Indonesia-Israel relations: political, social, and economic concerns. First, in political interests, the network is concerned with domestic and international politics. For domestic politics, IIPAC supports the candidacies of the president, ministers, governors, and regents with funding from 10 percent of social corporate responsibility funds and grants or grant funds from international supporters. They target executive and legislative candidates who support plans for diplomatic relations with Israel. They approached the 2014 general election process while Ketang was also running for political office (Hardita, 2010). In that year, IIPAC's existence began to emerge in the community. Due to high political costs, this legitimacy is used to help prospective state and regional leaders. This is because the organization has many donors from abroad.

In international politics, the Israel-Indonesia Chamber of Commerce also believes that their voice will be heard if Indonesia has diplomatic relations with Israel. Shahaf said,

“You want to influence us about the Palestinians. The more business we do with you, the bigger influence you have” (personal communication, march 24, 2024).

They know that Indonesia stands with Palestine in terms of foreign policy and will not have relations with Israel until Palestine is independent. So, the legitimization they push is the business network so that Israel and Indonesia have diplomatic relations. Even so, sometimes, this legitimacy is used for all Arab-majority countries that support Palestine (Maoz, 2013). However, often, their voices are not heard despite normalizing relations with Israel.

Second, for social interest, there is community empowerment in Jember that IIPAC holds. Their goal is to build business and investment cooperation in Indonesia. However, the cooperation is not for the benefit of institutions or individuals but for the benefit of the state and the people of Indonesia. The legitimacy of the interests of the society is because they

think that rich Israel can help develop the economy in Indonesia. Moreover, the prospect of significant investments will benefit Indonesia. This legitimation is a mutualistic concept when business relationships are linked to the actors, actions, and resources. If those elements work, the network will run well (Anderson et al., 1994).

IIPAC is also engaged in voicing the interests of democracy. This is because the ideology of the Israeli government is the same democracy as Indonesia, making it easier for the institution to legitimize. In addition, the norm of non-violence is the foundation for the organization to exert its influence in Indonesia. However, this value of non-violence often contradicts what Israel does to the Palestinians. This value exists because of the counter-terrorism program run by the US and Israel (Kurtulus, 2012). In addition, it is based on the history of the Holocaust experienced by the Jewish people. Thus, the value of pluralism is also implemented in legitimizing the institution.

Third, regarding economic interests, the relationship between Israel and Indonesia is essential because people like to make money. In addition, there is great business potential in Israeli trade in Indonesia. This is because the state of Israel excels in innovation and technology, which can help Indonesia in its development in agriculture. Indonesia is an agricultural country that needs technology to increase income. In fact, this legitimization of Israel's agriculture being better than Indonesia's has long been offered. Indonesia wanted to take advantage of this and build relations with Israel in 2006. However, when M.S. Hidayat, chairman of Kadin, and his entourage returned to Indonesia, there was much negative publicity, so they canceled the plan (Hardita, 2010).

### **3.2.2 Minority Groups Network**

The history of the entry of Jews into Indonesia dates back to before the Dutch colonized through trade networks around the 13th century. During the colonial period, the Jews formed a religious community and built a Zionist network centered in Surabaya. After independence, all kinds of activities originating from the Netherlands were eliminated with Presidential Decree No. 264/1962, which prohibited all activities of freemasonry and all its variants, such as Rosicrucian, Moral Re-armament, Lions Club, Rotary, and Bahaism. Under President Wahid, the regulation was revoked, and Jewish activities emerged. To keep the minority safe, they built a network to strengthen their identity in Indonesia.

### **Actors and their Networks**

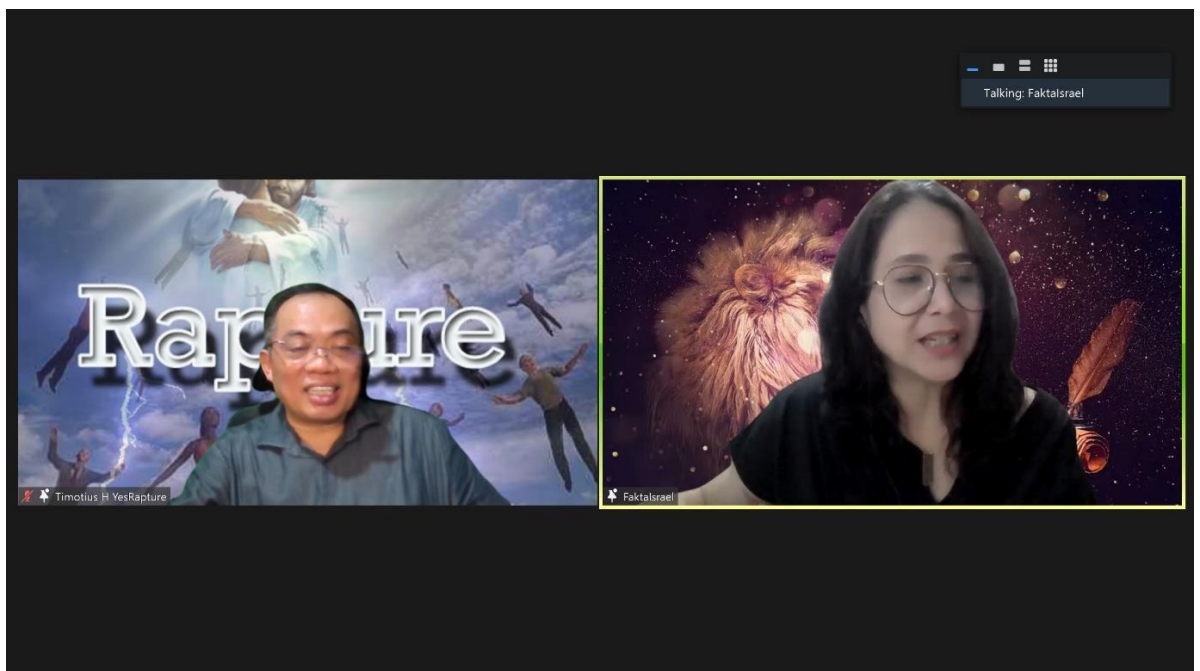
The Jewish network in various parts of the world does not deny that they also have a direct relationship with Israel. Some of these actors are deliberately invited directly to Israel to take part in several agendas, such as training or an introduction to the Jewish state itself. So, Israel deliberately invites many actors from Indonesia to visit Jerusalem. Moreover, the city is the birthplace of Jesus, or Prophet Isa, so people from Abrahamic religions make it a place for pilgrimage. More than that, the actors involved are more concerned with the existence of religious beliefs that are reinforced through the Gospels and the Torah to legitimize the existence of the state of Israel.

One of the actors in the Jewish network in Indonesia is Monique Rijkers, founder of Hadassah of Indonesia and Israel Facts. Building diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Israel has been her vision since 2012 when she first visited Israel. In 2016, she began educating Indonesians about Jews and the state of Israel through the non-profit organization. According to her, the majority of Indonesians have little knowledge about Jews due to a lack of interaction, resulting in a bad stigma. As a journalist who worked in the mass media for 18 years, she realized that the reporting about Jews and the history of the Holocaust in Indonesia was not correct, so she took part in it.

Indonesia's lack of interaction and knowledge about Jews and Israel can be seen in the many negative responses to these minorities. Wahid Foundation research named Jews as the third most hated group in 2016 and 2017. In April 2023, Saiful Mujani released survey data that said 69% of Indonesians were anti-Israel, only 20% liked it, and 11% were neutral. The research results show that Indonesia needs literacy about the facts about Israel and Palestine. This is because the negative attitude stems from rampant misinformation in the mass media and social media.

In her mission, Rijkers invited several actors to participate in her education about Israel. Her first step was to organize the Tolerance Film Festival in 2016, involving the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) to educate about anti-terrorism and the National Narcotics Agency (BNN) to provide insight into the medical use of marijuana. The connection with Israel is that Jews conducted the research from Israel. In addition, the actors involved in her advocacy network are the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the visa for her visit, and the Press Office, which invited her to attend the conference and learn about the existence of Hadassah of Indonesia and Israeli Facts. She says no Indonesian parties have been involved in her advocacy so far. However, she was invited by the National Defense Institute (Lemhanas) to present on "Prospects for Relations between Indonesia and Israel" in 2023.

Rijkers is also often invited to talk in Sunday services related to the Bible and the importance of the state of Israel. She collaborates with Pastor Timothy Hardono to educate his congregation regarding Israel as written in their Holy Book. The Israel Facts class is held regularly every week and is attended by dozens of participants from various regions. Their task is not only to listen to material presented by Rijkers, but they also convey it to worshipers in their respective regions. One class, held online through the Zoom application, was attended by more than 90 people, which I also attended. They were also enthusiastic in the question and answer session.



**Picture 1.** Hadassah of Indonesia holds an Israeli Facts class, which was conducted by Zoom.

However, the Hadassah of Indonesia organization is weak because there are no members. In this case, Rijkers has no members and works independently in managing her two non-profit organizations. The issues brought up are sensitive, and she feels safer working independently. She also admits that she does not receive funding from any party to maintain her independence, either from the Israeli government or the Indonesian government. According to Bernard P. Indik (1965), there is a strong relationship between organization size and member participation. Indeed, many studies say that large organizations usually have low member participation. However, what is emphasized here is how communication, coordination, and task specialization indirectly influence a good organizational structure. Meanwhile, the leader's task is not limited to being a member of the organization but rather

to influencing organizational activity (Stogdill, 1950). Even though he does not have members, she cooperates with other institutions.

Yaakov Baruch, founder of the Holocaust Museum and rabbi at Sha'ar Hashamayim Synagogue, Tondano, Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi, has a similar mission. After learning that his ancestors were Jewish, he embraced Judaism in junior high school. His initiative to build a Holocaust Museum was to commemorate his grandmother, who was a victim of the tragedy. In addition, he wants to educate the Indonesian people about the dangers of anti-semitism and racism by providing an overview of the difference between anti-semitism and being opposed to Israel. According to him, so far, Indonesian people still cannot distinguish between the two and often assume that Israel is the same as Judaism. Judaism itself is a religion like any other religion.

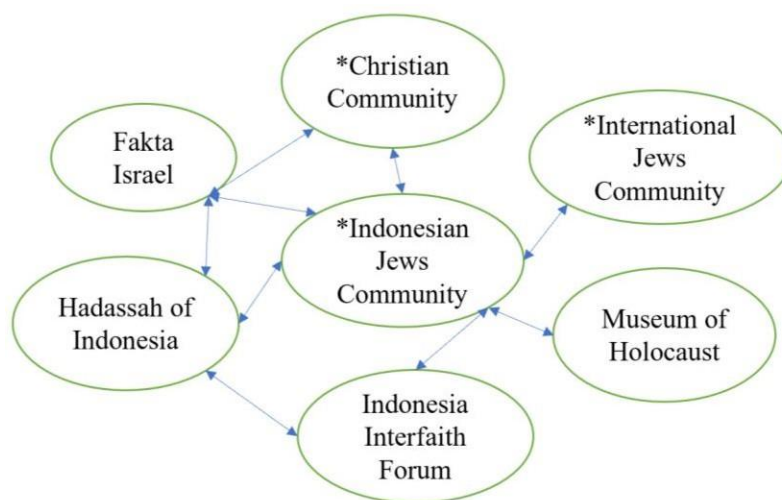
There are still overlapping definitions between anti-semitic, Zionist, anti-Zionist, Jewish, and anti-Jewish. The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance tries to redefine the definition of anti-semitism. "Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities" (holocaustremembrance.com). Zionism is a movement that seeks to establish a Jewish state in the land of Palestine. They claim the land as the land of ancient Israel. In 1948, the United Nations established the division of the two countries. However, many Arabs opposed the creation of the state of Israel. Not all Jews are Zionists and vice versa. Thus, anti-Zionism is defined as a movement to reject the existence of the state of Israel.

Meanwhile, Jews are a group of people who adhere to these religious beliefs. Anti-semitism can be defined as a movement against the religion.

In addition to educating about Jews through the Holocaust Museum, which officially opened on January 27, 2022, Baruch also actively provides education about the dangers of racism through the interfaith network. This is because Judaism is outside the six official religions in Law No. 1/1965 but is still recognized as long as it does not disturb public order. So, Jews do not enter the Religious Communication Forum (FKUB) but have their network with Bahai, Ahmadiyah, Shia, Sikh, Orthodox Christians, and even evangelical Christians. Indonesian Jews are members of the Indonesia Interfaith Forum, and Baruch is often invited to give talks at interfaith events. In addition to receiving support from the interfaith network, they are also assisted by the Setara Institute and the Institute for Interfaith Dialogue in Indonesia (Institut DIAN/Interfidei) to advocate for the interests of Jewish people in Indonesia.

Baruch's interest in actors from Israel is for worship materials such as prayer books. In addition, he also needs materials for museums that must be sent directly from Israel, such as posters and explanations of the Holocaust itself. Materials for worship on Jewish holidays in Indonesia are also imported from Israel. Even so, Baruch emphasizes that there is no funding from any party. All the needs for the construction and renovation of the museum are carried out jointly with his congregation there. Apart from Israel, they also have a network with Jews in America so that they get the need for worship not only from Israel.

In addition to building networks with international Jews, since 2000, Baruch has reactivated the Jewish community in Indonesia by contacting families of Jewish descent. After gathering, they established a synagogue in Tondano in 2004. What Baruch did was also done by Ketang when he started IIPAC earlier that year. Indeed, after the removal of President Wahid's presidential ban on Jewish activities, Jewish networks began to emerge in Indonesia. The Jewish community in Indonesia is estimated to be less than 100 people and spread throughout Indonesia. On holidays, they usually gather at the Tondano synagogue because the synagogue in Surabaya has been closed



\*Not all members of the community involved in pursuing Indonesia-Israel relations

**Figure 4.** Minority group networks in advocating Indonesia-Israel Relations Legitimation

Minority groups offer three legitimations: religious interest, maintaining identity, and economic concern. First, in relation to religious interest, Rijkers also approaches Christian congregations guided by Pastor Timothy Hardono. On May 12, 2024, she was the speaker at the Sunday service with the theme of the 76-year renewal of Israel. This is because the

Church and Israel are in a period where it is explained in the Book of Ezekiel that God promises the restoration of Israel. According to her, the world needs to know about God, who promised the land of Israel. In the book, God promises Israel three things: restoration, reconciliation, and affirmation. The legitimacy written in the Bible is an advocacy step taken by Rijkers to the Indonesian people, especially Christians and Jews. The legitimacy of Israel as a state promised by God to the Jewish people was used as a national Zionist movement to claim land in Palestine. This legitimacy is what makes two blocs in the international community, namely Arab and Muslim countries, support Palestine while Western Christians support Zionist claims. This position is divided due to religious concerns (Maoz, 2013; King, 2019). However, given the worsening situation in Palestine, these two blocs may no longer be relevant.

Second, they maintain an identity that shows how resilient their networks are due to being a minority group in Indonesia. Baruch said the importance of Indonesia-Israel relations was due to the material needs for worship for the Jewish people. So far, they have been constrained because they have to import from Israel for their holiday celebrations. If there is a good relationship between the two countries, it will facilitate their worship affairs. Even so, he never openly said the importance of the relationship for the existence of Jews in Indonesia. Because their interest is only to worship easily and comfortably, they need to respect every decision and policy of the state. In addition, Baruch admitted that he was not involved in politics and focused only on leading the Jewish people (personal communication, May 30, 2024). Because there are fewer than 100 people, Jews in Indonesia choose to maintain their identity and ensure security by strengthening the community. The way to maintain their identity is to support and help each other to have authority in some area (Adogame, 2003; Kinney, 2015). In this case, Jews in Indonesia have strong authority in Manado.

The existence of Jews in Indonesia is more important than being involved in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict of interest. For example, Baruch is often invited to events to explain about Jews on various media platforms, and interfaith dialogue events are a step in the way that the Indonesian people can accept them. Because he is aware of the minimal number in Indonesia, he does not want to expect much except to be able to worship in peace. Indonesian society still has a negative view of the Jewish community, so they need to be careful in taking steps. Currently, he is preparing administrative documents for Jewish religious organizations. Baruch said,

“I myself am preparing to administer the Jewish religious organization. Indeed, for the purposes of religious interests, there must be an organization. I want to prepare that in the future for more administrative recognition.” (Personal communication, May 30, 2024)

Third, regarding economic concerns, it shows how the networks legitimize Israel as a developed country. The advocacy steps taken by Rijkers are based on the potential benefits if Indonesia normalizes its relations with Israel. According to her, it is time for Indonesia to follow in the footsteps of the United Arab Emirates, Morocco, and Bahrain, which have already normalized relations. Indonesian tourism to Israel is also significant and ranks third-largest after China and South Korea. According to him, Israel was recognized as an official state on May 14, 1948, and Palestine also declared its independence in Algeria on November 15, 1988. The current conflict is that Israel has not recognized Palestinian independence because there is no definitive border, and Palestine claims East Jerusalem as its capital.

Rijkers' advocacy plan is to meet with Prabowo Subianto when he is president to suggest adopting Israeli technology in agriculture and livestock. According to her, Prabowo once served as chairman of the Indonesian Farmer Harmony Association (HKTI) and understands the need to achieve food security in Indonesia so as not to rely on imports. In addition, he also wants to invite President Joko Widodo to visit the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. According to him, as a former president, Widodo can bridge the Israeli-Palestinian issue by making peace with Israel. So far, Indonesia has not taken any concrete steps toward Palestine, so a top-down decision is needed to create peace with each other.

### **3.2.3 Islamic-Based Network**

One of the networks used by Israel is an Islamic-based network. This network emerged because of a counter-terrorism program run by the US after 9/11. Indonesia has a unique program that began in 2016 and is run by the Ministry of Religious Affairs with an Islamic personalization approach (Sholikhah, 2024). The government has aggressively promoted the program in various institutions affiliated with the Ministry of Religious Affairs. In 2018, the most prominent Islamic organization in Indonesia, NU, carried out a mission to continue President Wahid's footsteps in defending Palestine through interfaith dialogue with Israel. Thus, the role of religious moderation is closely related to the mission carried out by Israel.

### **Actors and their Networks**

Strengthening religious moderation in Indonesia by the Ministry of Religious Affairs is a follow-up to Presidential Regulation (Perpres) No. 18/2020 concerning the 2020-2024 National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN). There are four indicators for implementing the religious moderation program in public life: national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and acceptance of traditions. So, this program targets seven strategic groups expected to become actors in accelerating the mainstreaming of religious moderation in Indonesia: the bureaucracy, the world of education, the Indonesian Military (TNI)/National Police, the media, civil society, political parties, and the business world. This Islamic moderation program targets various actors who are not distinguished by their religious knowledge. They also strengthen it through a non-informal network in the Ministry of Religious Affairs, namely the Religious Communication Forum (FKUB).

In 2022, NU invited religious leaders through the R20 platform, totaling 464 invitations, and 170 came from five continents. It even invited the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), close to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in India. The invitation was controversial because it is a Hindu nationalist movement that represents extreme views. Thus, an interfaith discussion platform could address the abuses and threats received by minority populations in India. In addition, there were at least four keynote speakers at the R20 International Summit of Religious Authorities (ISORA) in 2023, namely the Rais Aam of the Executive Board of NU (PBNU) KH Miftachul Akhyar, Grand Sheikh of Al-Azhar Sheikh Ahmed Mohamed El Tayeb, Secretary General of the World Muslim League (MWL) Sheikh Muhammad bin Abdul Karim Al-Issa, and United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. This Islamic moderation network does not just focus on local actors but also on international actors.

This religious moderation program also led NU to follow Wahid's footsteps in defending Palestine. In 2018, some NU elites visited Israel to meet actors who had met with the fourth president. The actors were journalists, diplomats, and the Israeli ambassador to Singapore. Ahmad Suaedy, chairman of the PBNU, who participated in the mission, said that Wahid's big argument about Israel was to fight for Palestine. Because every time they fight for Palestine with violence, the war continues to harm the colonized country. The strategy of Arab countries to deal with Israel has always been through war. So, the approach taken by Wahid was one of dialogue.

At that time, Wahid collaborated with one politician who was quite influential in Israel and had been a minister and president, Peres. Peres was very open to dialogue and even opened the Shimon Peres Foundation, one of whose members was Wahid. So, Wahid approached

him because of his open views and as a moderate figure. The figures targeted by Wahid wanted to be invited to dialogue to return the land occupied by the war. Israeli PM Rabin opened a dialogue but was immediately killed by conservatives. The principle of interfaith relations requires dialogue to understand each culture and tradition. This is because dialog reflects differences and negotiates middle directions (Williams & Ruparell, 2014). So, it made sense for Wahid to build relationships with Israel to dialogue on the Palestinian issue. After the death of Wahid and Peres, this movement no longer continues, and the possibility is minimal. Seeing the condition of Palestine, it is increasingly impossible to dialogue about efforts to return the land as agreed before 1948.

Not only did NU follow in the footsteps of Wahid's inspiration, but Muhammadiyah also indirectly became part of it. When Wahid went to Israel, Muhammadiyah figure Habib Chirzin was one of the members invited to the dialogue. At that time, Wahid would invite anyone open to views on Palestinian interests. At this time, Muhammad Sirajuddin Syamsuddin, former chairman of Muhammadiyah, also voiced the importance of having an Indonesian representative in Israel to discuss Palestinian interests when he became speaker at the Conference on Indonesian Foreign Policy (CIFP) 2023 held by the Foreign Policy Community of Indonesia (FPCI). According to him, it would be challenging to discuss these interests if no representatives existed. This Islamic organization has also worked with the Magen David Adom organization in emergency medical services for over a decade (Eliraz, 2021).



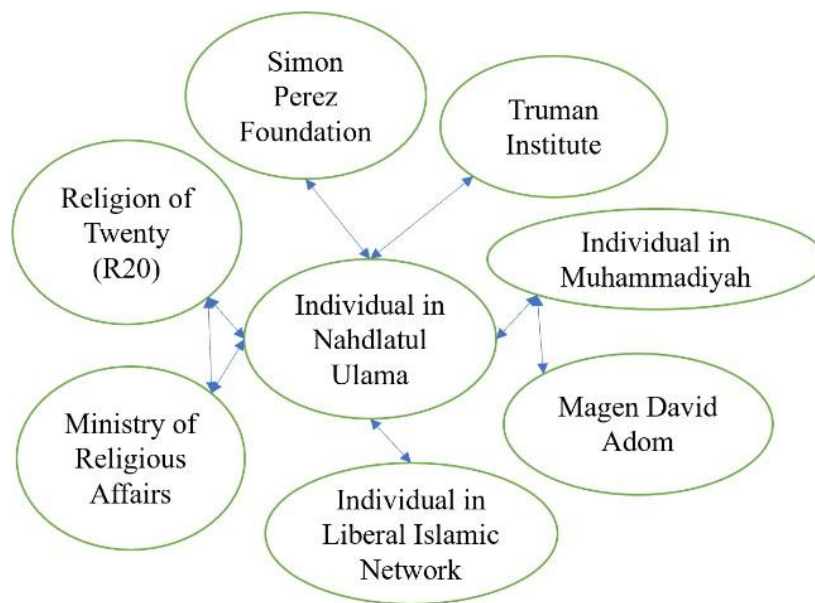
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- 2020 Editions
- 2019 Editions
- 2018 Editions
- 2017 Editions
- 2016 Editions
- 2015 Editions
- 2014 Editions
- 2013 Editions
- 2012 Editions

**Picture 2.** A group of Indonesians visits Israel, following in President Wahid's footsteps. This picture was shared in one of the researchers' private blogs from the Truman Institute.

Although not part of the leading network in Islamic moderation, Luthfi Assyaukanie from the Liberal Islamic Network has the same view as Wahid. According to him, Wahid's view of opening up to Israel is the principle of recognizing both parties at odds. The conflict is not colonization but a land dispute between Palestine and Israel. However, he underlined that the Indonesian people understand this conflict as a religious dispute. So, the interest in opening diplomacy with Israel is the first step in opening the dialogue. In addition, he emphasized that this program is also good for the national interest (Deduktif.id, 2024). Actors who voiced Wahid's mission did not only come from the NU and Islamic moderation networks but also the Liberal Islamic Network group, which also had an open view of Israel. Liberal thought aligns with moderation which contrasts with conservative groups (Rabasa, 2007).



**Figure 5.** Islamic-based networks in Indonesia-Israel relations

**Legitimation**

The Islamic-based network offers three legitimations: moderation, dialogue for representation, and pro-Palestine. First, moderation was critically analyzed in the NU-organized R20. Moderation is taken from a Western concept that leans toward the secular. Religious moderation wants to make extreme religion moderate, and it is a secular task. The Western concept of moderation seeks to uphold human rights by eliminating religion. So, Yahya Cholil Staquf, commonly called Gus Yahya, criticized this concept and made religion the subject of peace. At the R20 event, the guests were not intellectuals in the field

of religion but religious leaders (Ahmad Suaedy, personal communication, April 28, 2024). This is because the value of humanity should be taken from religion itself. In addition, interfaith dialogue is a process of dialoguing peace (Williams & Ruparell, 2014).

Second, dialogue for representation. The actors in the Islamic moderation network emphasized the need for a representative from Indonesia to be stationed in Israel. Because, according to them, to advocate for Palestinian interests, there must be a bridge in the country. However, if you want to take this step, you must consider that the issue is quite sensitive. If there is a representative there, it is the same as supporting Israel. Ahmad Suaedy said,

“to talk to Israel, at least on their side.” (Personal communication, April 28, 2024).

Actors who come to meet the Israeli government to talk about anything at least need to accept their policies or at least agree with what they are doing. However, Indonesia's foreign policy to date has been very harsh toward Israel, which contradicts the principle of this dialogue. In addition, this interfaith dialogue is also a concept developed by the US as a counter-terrorism program (Rabasa, 2007; Cherney & Murphy, 2016).

Third, considerations of pro-Palestine advocacy. As a Muslim-majority country, Professor Moshe Maoz said that every policy related to building relations with Israel should be a Palestinian issue. This is because any Israeli policy, even if it is democracy or living in peace with others, does not guarantee that it can change its perspective on Palestine (personal communication, May 28, 2024). Maoz once visited Indonesia in 1993 to attend an event at a university and realized that Indonesia still had little knowledge of Israel. As a Muslim living in Israel, he felt how discrimination occurs and the difficulty of advocating peace with the Israeli government (Yegar, 2006). Therefore, Indonesia-Israel relations should be able to resolve the conflict in Palestine regardless of this approach.

Although NU visited Israel and networked with several parties there, the strategy was a step to bridge Palestinian interests. NU firmly supports Palestine in many ways, one of which is conducting dialogue with the Israeli government. Ulil Abshar Abdalla, chairman of the PBNU emphasized that since the beginning NU has fully supported Palestine becoming an independent state (NU Online, 2023). Thus, the interests of Palestine are the main object of the Islamic moderation network.

**CHAPTER 4**  
**FINDING AND DISCUSSION (2)**

**4.1 What are the Consequences of the Legitimation?**

The advocacy network used by Israel to launch its mission to influence foreign policy, especially the normalization of Indonesia-Israel relations, has various impacts, both on society and at the government level itself. The impact is not always in the form of new policies but rather the potentials that lead to the decision to normalize relations. In addition, some have no impact due to the lack of strong advocacy for the government. Even so, advocacy efforts through framing are very influential on the network's sustainability and the results of the advocacy itself.

<b>Networks</b>	<b>Framing Alignment</b>	<b>Framing Resonance</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>Sustainability of the Network</b>
Business Networks	Youth group in Jember Chinese merchant network in Indonesia	Democracy, pluralism, and anti-violence Economic development	Maintenance of business network	No regeneration
Minority Group Network	Jewish and Evangelical Christian community	Anti-Semitism, interfaith dialogue, anti-racism, agricultural technology	Continuation framing and advocating the issue to the government	Strong connection
Islamic -Based Network	Networks that follow in Wahid's footsteps	Pro-Palestine, Interfaith dialogue	Seasonal and Individual	Fragile

**Table 2.** The consequences of legitimation in advocating Indonesia-Israel relations.

## 4.2 Business Networks

Although business networks have the potential to succeed in the relations between Indonesia and Israel, the actors do not have much influence at the government policy level. Their networks are grassroots to sustain the movement and ensure security. IIPAC's activities in Jember are constantly monitored by local security forces, which raises suspicions among residents. The army and police constantly monitor the NGO's offices. Although the residents always suspected the activities carried out by the youth group, there was no direct demonstration to reject the activities carried out by Ketang and his members. There was no repression from any party. They deliberately hid their original offices to protect the members involved. Batliwala (2002) says that their activities are referred to as transnational grassroots movements because they build blocs in communities. This is because their movement is led by marginalized groups who dare to speak out on global issues. According to him, this movement is quite important because of its good advocacy skills at the local and global levels so that it can strengthen the role of civil society in global policies.

In addition to political influence, their networks have always been attacked by conservative groups. The Israel-Indonesia Chamber of Commerce has also been attacked by the FPI. At the time of the opening of the office in Israel in 2009, one of the local news items from Israel was translated by FPI members and republished in Indonesia. They mentioned that the trade office was opening in Jakarta. At the time, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono immediately contacted the Israeli Embassy in Singapore and said, "How dare you open the Chamber of Commerce in Jakarta." The embassy immediately contacted him, and he clarified the news that the trade office was only in Israel. Emanuel Shahaf knows that the issue of Israel in Indonesia is very sensitive. For a long time, activities related to Israel have been monitored by conservative groups (Barton & Rubenstein, 2005; Barton, 2020).

There is a possibility of normalizing Indonesian-Israel relations in the economic and business fields, but not specifically as a result of advocacy carried out by NGOs or non-state actors in the economic field. For example, Indonesia wants to become a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), of which Israel is also a member. Until now, the plan has not been realized because Israel has asked for recognition as a state before Indonesia becomes a member. Even so, Indonesia still holds firm to the principle of defending Palestine and will not normalize the relationship (VOA Indonesia, 2024). Although the government continues to show the potential for normalization, the strong impression of the public has meant the policy has failed (Anwar,

2010). For a long time, Indonesians who are inclined toward Palestinian interests have also monitored policies to normalize relations with Israel.

Business networks cannot influence state policies; instead, their networks are disrupted because of the two countries' disharmonious policies. This business network aims to facilitate corporate and business affairs between countries to benefit each other. Foreign political affairs are the only external factors that cause difficulties in the relationship between these actors. Because, in the absence of diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Israel, the need for visas is complicated and requires considerable costs. In addition, the political effects of the two countries cause foreign policies that harm them. For example, in 2018, there was a ban on Indonesian citizens visiting Israel and vice versa. The concept that businesses only focus on profits and the state provides public goods is no longer relevant. This is because business relations are also affected by politics and social consequences as citizens (Scherer & Palazzo, 2011). In addition, the closeness of business actors with government elites affects the openness of the political economy (Mahmood et al., 2017). Thus, the disruption of business networks between Indonesia and Israel is a consequence of political dynamics.

One of the consequences of this business network can be seen from the data on Indonesia-Israel exports and imports every year. The data shows that Indonesia's exports to Israel reached \$185.6 million in 2022, equivalent to a 14 percent increase year-on-year (YoY). Meanwhile, imports from Israel increased by around 80 percent YoY to \$47.8 million. Most commodities Indonesia imports from Israel are technology equipment, such as heat pumps, hand machine tools, printing and binding machines, etc. Although this activity is business-to-business, it impacts a transnational business network. This network involves many actors who maintain it and advocate for the relationship between the two states. Actors in the advocacy network maintain business relationships by advocating for the government and influencing public opinion (Keck & Sikkink, 1998).

The business network movement weakly influences the government and community levels because they only maintain business relations for their profit. For example, in Jember, they cannot openly speak on behalf of Israel even though the organization's name indicates the movement's existence. They only say the Jewish network is a donor for the benefit of the community. In addition, business networks only focus on maintaining business relationships for mutual benefit. They do not have a specific mission to change Indonesia's foreign policy. Although that mission exists in IIPAC, the organization has had no regeneration. So, although the network uses alignment and resonance framing, regeneration

and the interest to continue advocating for the government are the primary keys to the success of a social movement.

### **4.3 Minority Group Networks**

In contrast to the advocacy outcomes of the business network, the minority in the religious network maintains the movement. Because it is a minority, this network becomes stronger to ensure security. The impact of advocacy and framing carried out by Rijkers through her non-profit organization Hadassah of Indonesia and social media Israel Facts has received a positive response from the community. Since she routinely speaks out on social media, especially on the Israel Facts Facebook account, many netizens have begun to speak out, comment on the posts, and share them. Because of her presence on social media, she is often invited to campuses, interfaith communities, and even religious communities. That way, Indonesians are no longer afraid to discuss and even speak out about Israel in public. This campaign is one of the strategies that social movements should take to make their advocacy impactful (Carpenter, 2007). The strategies carried out on various social media platforms are also part of framing resonance where they try to communicate the importance of the issues they advocate to the public. The goal is to change the public's view on issues that may be unfamiliar to them (Keck & Sikkink, 1999).

Collectively, they have dared to voice Israel's interests in Indonesia. This impact was seen during a conflict in Bitung, North Sulawesi. On November 28, 2023, the Manguni Makasiouw Indigenous organization carried an Israeli flag during its anniversary event. They had obtained permission from the police to carry out the activity. Meanwhile, Barisan Solidaritas Muslim (BSM), which held a rally to defend Palestine, did not get a permit but still held a demonstration on the same day. Thus, a clash occurred between the two mass organizations that supported the two conflicting countries. This impact occurred due to framing alignment, where people feel they have the same feelings so that they take collective action to promote their interests (Keck & Sikkink, 1999; Benford & Snow, 2000). Even so, the FKUB immediately came down and clarified the issue so there was no further conflict. Baruch has also prohibited his congregation from carrying Israeli flags to maintain security.

Despite the positive response from the public, Rijkers tries to advocate with the government to influence policy-making. She started accessing the Indonesian government in 2022 by approaching specific government figures. However, her efforts have not received a positive response because these officials want to protect themselves from being labeled pro-Zionist

or pro-Israel by the public. Not all officials Rijkers has met responded negatively. She was once contacted directly by an unnamed cleric at the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), who was interested in the issue of Israel. In addition, in June 2023, she was invited to the National Defense Institute (Lemhannas) to explain the prospects for relations between Israel and Indonesia. After his advocacy was successful, one of the figures from Lemhannas, Andi Widjajanto, visited Jerusalem to meet with the Israeli government to discuss opening an Indonesia-Israel Trade Office. Jewish Insider reported that Israel and Indonesia had plans to open diplomatic relations in October 2023 but were postponed due to the Hamas attacks of that month (Jewish Insider, 2024). However, the Indonesian government denied the news.

Framing by the Jewish and Christian communities significantly affects the existence of these religious minorities. The massive amount of information about Israel or education about Jews that they provide on various platforms gives new nuances for the public to rethink the potential for living in peace with these religious groups. In addition, this change in public opinion increases curiosity about the state of Israel itself. This is because, indirectly, knowing Jews also recognize Israel as a Jewish state. Although it is not openly stated that being pro-Jewish is the same as being pro-Israel. Just like the term pro-Zionist is not the same as pro-Israel, framing that is strengthened by networks throughout Indonesia and actively advocating the government has a considerable impact on changes in state policy.

#### **4.4 Islamic Based Network**

There is great potential in the Islamic-based network in advocating Indonesia-Israel relations. Even so, this network does not seem to be taken too seriously by the actors because many considerations need seriousness. Ahmad Suaedy said that the Islamic-based network that brought the religious dialogue to Israel should be taken seriously. However, this network stopped because Gus Yahya, the project carrier, had too much work to do. No one has dared to take the initiative to go to Israel for dialogue. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will not open diplomatic relations with Israel before the country liberates Palestine. So, this network is only seasonal, carried out in 2018, and no follow-up program exists. In fact, after the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, there were no more actors to continue Wahid's mission.

Advocacy carried out by the Islamic moderation network is seasonal when the Israeli government can be invited to dialogue about peace with Palestine. At that time, Wahid

dared to initiate dialogue in 1994. He continued during his presidency because of his closeness to Peres, eventually creating an institution with him (Ahmad Suaedy, personal communication, April 28, 2024). The initiative did not continue after Wahid stepped down from his position as president and the death of Peres. However, the mission was continued by actors who had been with him to oversee it (Wirawan, 2019). Looking at the current situation, it may not be certain that Wahid also had the same mission to build Indonesia-Israel relations.

In addition, this Islamic moderation network is very closed, and no media broadcasts it openly. The mass media highlighted only news of Gus Yahya's visit to Israel. Researchers from the Truman Institute at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem reported the visit of the actor who succeeded in Wahid's footsteps in 2020. In a photo, nine Indonesians and two people from Israel accompany them. Behind them stands the Israeli flag. So, this network is grassroots and not as overt as other networks (Batliwala, 2002). Ahmad Suaedy said that when he joined the group, he met all the people Wahid used to meet, such as journalists, diplomats, and the Israeli embassy in Singapore.

The PBNU condemned the activities carried out by five NU activists who visited Israel to dialogue on the Israeli-Palestinian issue with Israeli President Isaac Herzog on July 14, 2024 (NU Online, 2024). According to them, the five activists did not understand the geopolitical context. So far, the involvement of members of an Islamic society organization seems to represent the activities of an organization because those involved are always members who are active in the organization. Their activities are individual because the Islamic organization has never issued an assignment letter or recommendation for their visit to Israel. All these activities are the initiative of the individuals themselves. For example, Wahid's visit to Israel also drew opposition from Nahdliyyin itself. The steps taken by Gus Yahya and the team of Wahid's followers in 2018 are also the same as what Wahid did before.

The US goal in building this moderate Islamic network is actually to tame the colonized party and dehumanize the colonial activity. This is because the movement of de-radicalization, religious freedom, peace, tolerance, and humanity, which is a package in interfaith dialogue, is to smooth out the interests of the colonizers (Fina, 2024). As Ahmad Suaedy said above, the term moderation, a concept from the West, wants to abolish religion to uphold human rights. So, on the one hand, this Islamic moderation network still follows the program from the West and wants to be independent by compiling its concept through the R20 program and by following in the footsteps of Wahid.

Although some actors use social media framing to voice Wahid's mission, this approach does not change state policy. In addition, there was little impact on changing public opinion because the framing was aimed at religious groups, especially those who knew Wahid or at least those who followed the fourth president's movement. The Gus Yahya movement and a group from NU also did not contribute much to changes in state policy in Indonesia-Israel relations. Thus, this network is more fragile because it is run individually instead of being organization-based.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 Conclusion**

Israel has long been seeking cooperation with Southeast Asian countries in various sectors, such as in the economic, political, cultural, and military fields. Israel's desire to build these relations is evident in its diplomatic relations with China, India, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, Myanmar, South Korea, and Japan. Ties with Vietnam have been established since 1993 based on national interests, such as military, economic, and political (Ningthoujam, 2017). Thus, Israel is aggressively approaching countries with which it does not yet have diplomacy, such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam. These three countries are Muslim-majority countries. Even so, Israel has difficulties because the three countries condemn the Zionist state for causing the deaths of so many Palestinians. Moreover, Indonesia has emphasized that it will not open diplomatic relations before Israel liberates Palestine.

Even so, Israel has not run out of ideas in continuing to try to build diplomatic relations with Indonesia. The two governments have established good relations since the Soeharto era through trade relations and military interests. At that time, Indonesia was at war in East Timor and needed weapons. Seeing this great potential and the hope to advocate Palestinian interests, Wahid visited Israel in 1994 before being elected president. From then on, good relations were established through interfaith dialogue to discuss peace issues directed toward Palestinian independence. Wahid became a member of the Shimon Peres Foundation and collaborated with the Truman Institute, which was concerned with the Islamic field. When elected president, Wahid immediately launched his mission to establish diplomatic relations with Israel. However, the plan failed because many conservatives opposed it.

Wahid had built a network with many parties during his visit to Israel, such as businessmen, journalists, embassies, and activists. In addition, he was also supported by various actors in Indonesia, some of whom would continue his mission to build relations between the two countries. So, Israel utilizes the relationships established between these non-state actors to approach Indonesia. Israel also has a Hasbara strategy where they pursue propaganda and public diplomacy strategies around the world. They invite journalists, politicians, key opinion leaders, and NGO activists in Indonesia to Israel to attend training programs. In addition, they

are also given financial support to advocate pro-democracy, human rights, and anti-terror messages. This transnational network is the crucial actor that still survives to advocate for Israel's interests in Indonesia through various framings.

This research found that at least three essential networks actively advocate for Israel-Indonesia relations: business, religious, and Islamic moderates. First, the business network was formed long before the Dutch colonial period because the Jewish people had built good relations with traders in Indonesia. So, this network grew after Israel became a state and close relations between traders, especially China, meant Israel also had ties with Indonesia. The majority of traders in Indonesia are ethnic Chinese. Because of this business interest, they finally tried to advocate for Indonesia-Israel relations to facilitate trade affairs. So far, they have had difficulty establishing business relations due to the absence of diplomatic relations between the two countries. One alternative is to build an Israel-Indonesia Chamber of Commerce with its office in Israel. Even so, this advocacy only stops at business matters to maintain relationships between business people.

In addition to these formal institutions, NGOs are developing in Indonesia that are run by non-state actors, specifically IIPAC. The organization also advocates for the interests of this business network because it sees the economic potential that can provide for the welfare of the Indonesian people. Therefore, many Israeli investors want to be involved in Indonesia's business affairs. To launch its efforts, the organization built a youth group active in the livestock and agriculture field. Advocacy is done by providing 10 percent of CSR funds for presidential candidates, governors, or regents who will run for office and support the mission of the Indonesia-Israel relationship. Although this organization had a clear mission, there has been no regeneration since the founder and director of the NGO passed away.

Secondly, the minority group networks established through the Jewish and Christian communities are very identity conscious in Indonesia. This is because their numbers are very small, the number of Jewish people is fewer than 100. They continue to educate the public about their religion through various programs and social media to protect each other. Their existence is slowly being recognized by being invited by important actors to speak about Israel and Jews. They emphasize the importance of living peacefully with democracy, anti-terrorism, anti-violence, and pluralism. With the similarity of the issues, these non-state actors are often invited to fill interfaith dialogue activities. In addition to changing public opinion about Israel and Jews, they also actively advocate to the government about the prospects of Indonesia-Israel relations. As a result of this advocacy, the Indonesian

government attempted to establish diplomatic relations last year. However, it had to be postponed due to the war between Israel and Hamas.

Third, the Islamic-based network was formed because of the US program after the 9/11 tragedy that emphasized peace and anti-terrorism. This network started when President Wahid began building relations with Israel to liberate Palestine. He felt that if Indonesia could have relations with China, which is a communist country, this Muslim-majority country should be able to have relations with the Jewish state. He used the basis of Pancasila, the One True God. NU actors continued the mission in the program to continue Wahid's footsteps by conducting dialogue with Israel. In addition, they also met with actors whom Wahid used to meet. The activity was very secretive and was only written down by one of the researchers from the Truman Institute who had met them. This network is no longer running because the main actors in the program have other activities. Therefore, building an Islamic moderation network in the mission of Indonesia-Israel relations requires seriousness.

The results of this study show that there are differences between the three networks in the legitimization process that mean they have had different levels of sustainability. The minority group is more sustainable due to the strength of the network in ensuring security and maintaining identity than the other networks. The advocacy strategy is not only through a bottom-up process but also accompanied by top-down to lead public opinion. The strength of framing alignment and framing resonance also determines how this advocacy process influences policy-making at the government level. TANs legitimize societal issues and advocate for state interests, one of which is promoting the interests of Indonesia-Israel diplomatic relations.

## **5.2 Limitation and Scope**

Given this limitation, this paper examines Indonesia's dynamic transnational network that advocates for Indonesia-Israel relations. Although Indonesia does not have formal diplomatic relations with Israel, there is a growing grassroots network. This network is quite extensive, ranging from direct and indirect engagement. This article is limited to the scope of the networks influencing state behavior, such as business, religion, and Muslim moderates. So, other networks may also influence foreign policy, especially regarding Indonesia-Israel relations. In addition, there may still be advocacy groups that also successfully influence public opinion. With its limitations, this paper can be an alternative for further research.

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## **Interview**

Oryza A. Wirawan. (March, 2024). Journalist at Jember

Soponyono. (March, 2024). Former Member of IIPAC Jember

Emanuel Shahaf. (March, 2024). Vice Chairman of Israel-Indonesia Chamber of  
Commerce

Monique Rijkers. (May, 2024). Founder and Director of Fakta Israel and Hadassah of  
Indonesia

Yaakov Baruch. (May, 2024). Founder of Museum Holocaust and Jewish Rabbi at Sha'ar  
Hashamayim Synagogue, Tondano, Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi.

Ahmad Suaedy. (April, 2024). Chairman of the Nahdlatul Ulama Executive Board

Prof. Moshe Maoz. (May, 2024). Former Head of Truman Institute at Hebrew University