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▶ **Indivisible Security and Collective Security Concepts**

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▶ **Global Maritime Fulcrum: Indonesia's Middle Power Strategy Between Belt And Road Initiatives and Free-Open Indo Pacific**

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▶ **Refugee-Related Political Violence in Asia and Africa**

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# Contents

Volume 15, Issue 3, September 2021

## Research Articles

- 4 Indivisible Security and Collective Security Concepts  
*Implications for Russia's Relations with the West*  
*Artem Kvartalnov*
- 30 Global Maritime Fulcrum: Indonesia's Middle Power Strategy Between  
Belt And Road Initiatives (BRI) and Free-Open Indo Pacific (FOIP)  
*Fadhila Inas Pratiwi, Irfa Puspitasari, Indah Hikmawati, Harvian Bagus*
- 56 Refugee-Related Political Violence in Asia and Africa  
*Lucie Konečná, David Mrva*

## Book Reviews

- 78 Trisha Goodnow, James J. Kimble (eds.): The Ten Cent War - Comic  
Books, Propaganda and World War II  
*Reviewed by Tomáš Kratina*
- 84 Kate O'Neill: Waste  
*Reviewed by Adéla Hofmannová*

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Research article

# Indivisible Security and Collective Security Concepts: Implications for Russia's Relations with the West

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## Abstract

*The indivisible security principle was first set out in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and since then has been included in numerous international treaties and national strategic documents. However, the concept remains ambiguous and has not received due attention. The collective security concept has in turn been studied extensively by researchers who represent different paradigms and who have come up with diverse understandings of the term. This article adds to the ongoing conceptualisation of collective security and indivisible security and considers the implications of both concepts for European and global security arrangements in the context of Russia's relations with the West. First, I analyse the history of the indivisible security and collective security concepts and briefly review relevant literature. Further, I come up with my conceptualisation of both notions, illustrating the theoretical claims with the case of Russia's relations with NATO and EU countries. Building on this analysis, I assess the implications of both approaches for European and global security. I conclude that the international system cannot solely rely on either collective security or indivisible security and state the need for a middle-ground approach based on the decoupling/compartmentalisation of different policy areas.*

**Keywords:** *indivisible security, collective security, network diplomacy, NATO, OSCE, Russia*

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## **Introduction**

The perceived objective of any modern security policy is to sustain peace. Whatever policymakers do, official documents and statements call for peace, reconciliation and stability. War is not appealing today, and the desire for it has been largely marginalised. Nevertheless, wars, conflicts and tensions are still there, and they usually result from mutual misperceptions and misunderstandings emerging in the pursuit of peace rather than from innate aggressiveness. This insight has pushed international relations scholars into studying security dilemmas,<sup>1</sup> cybersecurity dilemmas,<sup>2</sup> integration dilemmas,<sup>3</sup> identity issues,<sup>4</sup> etc. However, international relations scholarship has not done enough to endogenise some of the visions of security that underlie competing approaches to international politics. This appears to be an obstacle to further research, as longstanding disputes about the future world order may lack real content.

This article discusses two opposing notions that have featured prominently in the European political discourse: indivisible security and collective security. My theoretical argument is that both concepts are flawed in terms of global vision because they largely neglect the barriers to their universal implementation. More specifically, neither of the two concepts can serve as the sole basis of a smoothly functioning world order because collective security leads to exclusion and inequality, whereas indivisible security lacks efficient problem-solving mechanisms. To illustrate this point, I use a case study of Russia's relations with the West. My empirical argument is twofold. On the one hand, I demonstrate that Russia's foreign policy after 1991 has been more consistent than usually assumed. On the other hand, I show that the full-fledged implementation of the indivisible security concept that Russia has been calling for would not necessarily be in Russia's interest.

The paper is organised as follows. First, I consider the history of indivisible security and collective security approaches and the conditions associated with the rise of both concepts, as well as briefly review their theoretical foundations and relevant literature. Further, I trace the hidden meaning of these notions and the underlying contradictions, illustrating my theoretical claims with the case study. Based on this analysis, I assess the implications of both approaches for European and global security and come up with my conclusions.

## **Historical background**

Although the idea of collective security can be traced back to Kant's Perpetual Peace,<sup>5</sup> it saw its heyday only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Article X of the Covenant of the League of Nations provided for collective action against security threats.<sup>6</sup> The League failed to deter German, Italian and Japanese aggression, and the collective security concept was overshadowed by the idea of collective defence after World War II. NATO and the Warsaw Pact are the most obvious manifestations

of the collective defence tradition. Starting as purely military tactical arrangements at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, collective defence organisations evolved into value-laden regional bodies of like-minded countries. A collective defence organisation brings together the countries that rule out the possibility of war among them and are eager to pursue common security goals, considering ‘an attack against one Ally <...> as an attack against all Allies.’<sup>7</sup> The relevance of such a security pattern increases in hard times, when nations have difficulty trusting one another. This was the case at the beginning of the Cold War, when the foundation for the modern European security architecture was laid. Collective defence was a new beginning for the notion of collective security: after the collapse of the bipolar world order, NATO assumed responsibility for maintaining security in and around Europe, going beyond the classical logic of collective defence.<sup>8</sup> The new tradition of collective security is exclusive rather than inclusive, since it does prioritise the security of some nations and regions over the security of others. It is apparent in political uses of the term: for instance, in 2002, Russia and its allies established the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO),<sup>9</sup> which is actually based on the collective defence posture.

The advent of indivisible security is associated with different circumstances. The Helsinki Final Act of 1975, where the principle of equal and indivisible security was set out, signified the willingness of countries in the Euro-Atlantic area to maintain the status quo and to sustain peace. The principle of indivisible security implied that ‘[c]o-operation is beneficial to all participating States, while the insecurity in or of one participating State can affect the well-being of all.’<sup>10</sup> In practice, this means that ‘States will not strengthen their security at the expense of other States.’<sup>11</sup> The notion of indivisible security has not received due attention from the academic community; it remains underconceptualised and has been seen by some scholars as vague and even destructive.<sup>12</sup> However, indivisible security is still there: the notion was explicitly mentioned in the 1990 Charter of Paris for a New Europe,<sup>13</sup> the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act,<sup>14</sup> as well as in the 1999 Charter for European Security.<sup>15</sup> The term ‘indivisible security’ has been included in all major Russian strategic documents since 2000.<sup>16</sup>

### **Literature review and discussion of the concepts**

The concepts of collective security and indivisible security, as well as related ideas, have been addressed by scholars working in both realist and idealist traditions. An important feature of analyses focusing on collective security is their diversity in terms of the existing conceptualisations of what collective security is and how effective it can be.

Williams and Jones view modern collective security as a continuation of the tradition of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century that has been discussed above. From their per-

spective, collective security is 'definitely not an idea or concept whose time has now come'.<sup>17</sup> To substantiate this opinion, the authors cite the failure of collective security in the 1930s in the case of 'Italy's sudden and unprovoked attack on Abyssinia',<sup>18</sup> when no member of the League of Nations reacted properly to the obvious violation of international norms. Williams and Jones believe that the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) assumed the role of the League of Nations after World War II, leading to few meaningful changes in the implementation of collective security. 'The Security Council found it difficult to agree on who was the real aggressor, and, then as a result, its permanent members have split and backed one or other of the belligerents involved. This, in turn, let the conflict take its natural course and the outcome was then determined on the battlefield.'<sup>19</sup> Those few endeavours that were successful are described as not really collective, since they were 'under American tutelage'.<sup>20</sup>

Applying this theoretical framework to Western alliances, Williams and Jones introduce the idea that collective security is hardly feasible due to the inherent differences between security and defence. They point out that defence issues identified as such do not usually cause debates among allies, which is why it is quite easy to agree on the concerted reaction to a defence crisis, such as the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. In contrast, a security issue does not imply an immediate threat; therefore, diverging economic and political interests make a prompt concerted reaction hardly possible.<sup>21</sup>

Charles A. Kupchan and Clifford A. Kupchan adopted a different reference point. While analysing the collective security concept, they do not compare it with collective defence. What they emphasise is that 'collective security is preferable to balancing under anarchy'.<sup>22</sup> The authors' vision of collective security goes well with the understanding I stick to. The Kupchans highlight that '[a]ny institution that is predicated upon the principles of regulated balancing and all against one falls into the collective security family'.<sup>23</sup> From their perspective, the key advantages of collective security are 'more effective balancing against aggressors' and the promotion of 'trust and cooperation'.<sup>24</sup>

Mearsheimer views collective security as one of several approaches that emphasise the role of international institutions. Being a structural realist, he calls the assumptions of collective security into question. First, he points out that a collective security system can only deal with one or two threats concurrently, which may be not enough in realist global politics.<sup>25</sup> Second, 'states [of a collective security system] are likely to remain on the sidelines if [their] vital interests are not threatened'.<sup>26</sup> Third, Mearsheimer points out that collective security necessitates trust, which is certainly scarce in the international system.<sup>27</sup>

Even though the concepts of collective security and indivisible security do overlap sometimes, they are characterised by different emphases. This can be

clearly seen in literature dealing with the problem of creating a pan-European security architecture from the perspective of indivisible security. MccGwire pinpoints that security *in* Europe 'is conceptually distinct' from the security *of* Europe: the latter assumes 'an external threat to a Europe that does not include Russia', whereas the former 'is a more inclusive concept, reaching from the Atlantic to the Urals'.<sup>28</sup> According to MccGwire, 'the concepts of threat and security are highly subjective, <...> one country's security can be another's insecurity,' which is why 'it is counterproductive to focus on the security concerns of one or a few countries'.<sup>29</sup> MccGwire's key conclusion (his article was published in 1998) is that NATO enlargement 'threatens Washington's cooperative relationship with Moscow'.<sup>30</sup>

Russian scholars studying the topic typically arrive at similar conclusions. As Zagorski put it in 2014, '[i]n spite of the declared adherence to the principle of indivisible cooperative security, the levels of security in different parts of the OSCE [Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe] area remain different. The conventional arms control regimes, which in the past decades ensured reductions in armed forces and armaments unprecedented in the history of Europe, have gone into decline'.<sup>31</sup>

Ellehuus and Zagorski maintain that 'Treaty organizations such as NATO and the European Union could increase transparency with Russia and stability on the European continent by acknowledging the OSCE language on indivisible security requiring the legitimate security concerns of neighboring states to be considered'.<sup>32</sup>

However, the Russia-friendly perspective on indivisible security is not the only one. Remler from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace rightly believes that Russia itself abuses the indivisible security concept. First, he points out that Russia insists on decoupling security issues from human rights, which actually violates the spirit of the Helsinki Final Act. Second, he emphasises that the Istanbul Charter for European Security adopted by Russia acknowledges 'the inherent right of each and every participating State to be free to choose or change its security arrangements, including treaties of alliance'.<sup>33</sup>

My paper builds on many of these perspectives. I will briefly comment on some of them to better illustrate the theoretical framework that I draw on. First, I do not call into question the feasibility of either of the two concepts. Both collective security and indivisible security are useful principles that can guide international security relations. Even if a collective security organisation may fail to deal with more than two major threats simultaneously, the existence of such an organisation does entail real-world consequences, such as a plausible deterrence effect and the enormous effect that NATO enlargement has had on the Russian foreign policy discourse. Moreover, the 1990s saw a number of NATO



interventions that succeeded despite the fact that those interventions were not a question of defence. Similarly, even though Russia seems to abuse the indivisible security concept, the concept itself continues to be viable and attractive, as it has a solid ideational basis. Second, I insist that collective security is an *exclusive* rather than inclusive security concept. 'All against one' institutions are necessarily limited to their members, which means that those outside are left aside. This is true even for the UN collective security system, since those outside of the UNSC have no voice when collective security decisions are made.

For the purposes of this study, collective security can be defined as a principle of providing security for a *limited* number of nations by a *limited* number of nations. Indivisible security is the principle of providing *equal* security to all nations regardless of their political, economic or ideological commitments.

### **Mechanisms and political implications**

The collective security and indivisible security concepts entail real-world consequences in terms of the way regional and global security systems are arranged. Collective security is granted only to those who meet particular criteria (Castells calls such a relationship 'networking power').<sup>34</sup> This logic appears justifiable, as modern collective security organisations, which originated from collective defence structures, are still based on the collective defence posture: it would be unwise to guarantee equal political and military assistance to any country, as the League of Nations attempted to do so and is known to have failed. We do not have enough evidence to determine whether NATO's Article 5 works: it might prove to be another self-fulfilling myth that would collapse in case of a real threat. However, the history of the League of Nations makes us acutely aware of the fact that collective security most likely cannot work without the underlying exclusiveness principle. NATO does engage in security efforts beyond its borders, but it does not provide guarantees to outsiders. Within the framework of collective security, commitment to principles and loyalty to allies are generally prioritised over strict compliance with international law and respect for the interests of non-member states. Thus, security groupings tend to overestimate their ability to address international issues single-handedly and frequently neglect potential cooperation opportunities.

The opposite is the case with indivisible security. The concept of indivisible security is not purely Russia's justification for its quest for 'the non-aligned status of the buffer states'.<sup>35</sup> It is a vision of security that rules out the possibility of any strict preconditions for elaborating an integrated peace strategy. If some countries co-exist in a particular region, they are supposed to have common security interests. Consequently, they need inclusive international platforms to communicate. The concept of indivisible security emphasises the need for equal,

written rules to regulate international behaviour and does not recognise the right of nations to act on the basis of 'narrow loyalties' to friends and allies. As Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov put it in Baku in 2017, 'a situation where some are provided with clear legal guarantees, while others must be content with promises no one is going to fulfill, is unacceptable.'<sup>36</sup> Whether countries within an indivisible security framework can assume substantive legally binding security obligations in theory is an open question. In practice, the resulting security architecture is typically confined only to deliberative bodies, such as conferences and councils, and restrictive norms, such as the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty)<sup>37</sup> or the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM Treaty)<sup>38</sup> – without any real mutual security guarantees.

Both indivisible security and collective security imply a certain underlying peace strategy. Under collective security, peace is attained through the enlargement of the 'area of harmony', existing inside a collective security organisation. This organisation must be institutionally strong from the very beginning, and it must be based on absolute trust among its members (which is seen as impossible by Mearsheimer, as noted above). The area of stability and peace can hypothetically engulf the entire world, as soon as each and every country commits itself to the norms and values adopted by the collective security organisation. Therefore, the enlargement of a grouping is seen as the right path towards achieving better security for everyone by means of granting *complete* security to *some* nations. NATO enlargement can be viewed as a mechanism of socialising less developed nations into the community of countries that have developed new 'security mindsets'.<sup>39</sup> Whether an enlargement is a real success on the road to peace is determined by the extent to which new members have developed these new mindsets and joined the 'area of harmony'.

The indivisible security concept rejects this reasoning and legitimately points to the inequality resulting from the collective security approach. Strong security guarantees can hardly ever embrace the entire world, which is why collective security organisations simply embody better access to security for some nations, excluding the rest of the globe. Missile defence systems and new military bases are a sure way to enter into a new arms race. Consequently, it might seem more reasonable to gradually develop *equal* arrangements for everyone, even if these arrangements turn out imperfect and incomplete. Better security for everyone is achieved by means of granting *some* security to *every* nation. In the long run, weak inclusive institutions can hypothetically evolve into a comprehensive security architecture, sustaining peace in a whole region or even throughout the world.

Apparently, contradictions between the two notions of security are inevitable. Those outside an exclusive security organisation have no reason to toler-

ate exclusion. Under a collective security system, the most important issues are discussed by the insiders (since they trust each other and tend to stick together), while the resulting decisions are implicitly imposed on the outsiders, who simply lack institutional capabilities to state their position. Those inside, for their part, have no incentive to give up the unprecedented level of security just to become equal participants of fragile 'inclusive' security arrangements.

The pattern described above roughly reflects the collision between different visions of European security and the positions adopted by NATO countries and by the Russian Federation respectively. Russia has been denouncing NATO enlargement for decades, advocating a special role for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and 'pan-European security structures'. However, the clash between indivisible and exclusive collective security approaches represents an analytical framework that could hypothetically be applied to different regions and eras. Therefore, this collective security VS. indivisible security dilemma deserves particular attention.

### **Collective security and the world order**

The first problem with exclusive collective security organisations has already been mentioned: they are too tight to meet everyone's expectations. The 'area of democracy and peace' is a nice idea, but it is increasingly unclear if it can be universally implemented in practice. Historical evidence demonstrates that political unity rarely lasts long: Watson's pendulum theory<sup>40</sup> suggests that international politics constantly swings between empire and anarchy. Thus, the democratic peace order is unlikely to preserve its cohesiveness in the long run after achieving the state of dominance, and Western scholars seem to be perfectly aware of this fact.<sup>41</sup> This does not necessarily mean the demise of democracy itself: the point is that nations may easily start a new extended dispute, having agreed on democratic principles. Some scholars hope that Western material hegemony can establish effective rules ensuring security and prosperity after its decline.<sup>42</sup> This hope may turn out to be misplaced: modern nation-states defeated empires, set new comprehensive rules, and simply split up into capitalists, socialists, democrats and dictators, creating new confrontation lines. This is what can (but will not necessarily) happen to a democratic collective security institution whose values have evolved into the global norm and eliminated alternative visions. Therefore, the enlargement of a collective security organisation is both a blessing and a curse: it helps to strengthen security, simultaneously creating risks of disintegration in the long term.

The processes of NATO and EU enlargement have already caused this threat to become apparent. When Eastern European countries were admitted to Western political and economic institutions, the US was able to tighten control over

Europe, since such countries as Poland and Hungary viewed (and continue viewing) Washington rather than Brussels as the provider of their security.<sup>43</sup> Autonomist trends did recede: the 1992 Petersberg Declaration of the Western European Union (WEU) calling for the empowerment of the WEU<sup>44</sup> has never been implemented, whereas NATO continued to play the role of Europe's military defender. What followed later was, however, a trend towards disintegration in the ideational domain. Today, Poland and Hungary are viewed as key challengers of European values. This newly established dividing line creates problems for the European consensual decision-making framework.

The second challenge is closely connected with the first one. As modern collective security institutions prioritise the security of member states, those outside may protest by means of undermining the activities of the organisation in question or establishing competing institutions, which might create another cold war situation. The 'area of harmony' can simply be destroyed by those who were not included in it.

This is exactly the type of activity that Russia has been engaged in. Being unable to join the privileged grouping, Moscow has been trying to undermine the heightened security level of NATO countries. Several dimensions of this can be identified. First, Russia has done a lot to neutralise any kind of missile defence in Europe and North America. As Russian Deputy Prime Minister Borisov put it in 2018, Russia's hypersonic glide vehicle Avangard 'almost nullifies missile defence'.<sup>45</sup> Moscow's hypersonic weapons certainly add to the insecurity of NATO. Second, Russia denied Europe a high level of security in the tactical domain by suspending the CFE Treaty in 2007 and 'completely' halting participation in the Treaty in 2015.<sup>46</sup> Third, Russia has allegedly attempted to disrupt Western political systems by means of carrying out election meddling<sup>47</sup> and providing support for right-wing forces in EU countries.<sup>48</sup>

Hence, there are two diametrically opposed negative scenarios for an order based on collective security. The first scenario implies the destruction of the leading collective security organisation by those dissatisfied with its dominant position. The second scenario is the disintegration of the grouping after achieving global or regional hegemony, which derives from the 'laws of history'.

A stable collective security system requires balancing between the two poor outcomes. I posit that perfect balancing draws on several complementary strategies.

### *1. Luring*

The luring strategy is designed to avoid the first scenario. If a collective security organisation provides an outstanding level of security, some outsiders might think about joining it. The effective opportunity to join a successful grouping discourages non-member states from undermining the activities of the collective security organisation. At present, Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova cannot

be admitted to NATO because their accession could undermine NATO's unity. However, Ukraine and Moldova do not perceive NATO as a threat, since the alliance seems to be open to them. This is how 'networking power' shapes the incentives of those outside the grouping. The luring approach frequently includes the so-called conditionality principle,<sup>49</sup> which helps to maintain internal homogeneity and to restrain the enlargement process. If the effective opportunity to join turns into a formal opportunity, the strategy crumbles. This is what seems to have happened in Russia's relations with the West: even though Russia did participate in some Western fora, such as the Group of Eight (G8), it felt isolated and lamented that its position remained unheard.<sup>50</sup>

## *2. Appeasement*

When outsiders do not believe in their right to join the privileged grouping anymore or cannot be admitted to it for objective reasons (such as normative incompatibility), the collective security organisation can resort to the appeasement strategy. It implies retaining the faith of non-member states in the harmlessness of the grouping. If you never take advantage of your enormous opportunities, you are less likely to be seen as a threat. The strategy of convincing others that they have nothing to fear has certainly been employed by NATO. For instance, NATO has done quite a lot to show Moscow that European ballistic missile defence (BMD) is not directed against Russia.<sup>51</sup> If the alliance had been successful in convincing Russia that Moscow has nothing to fear, most likely, the Kremlin would not have launched its hypersonic weapon programmes intended to overcome BMD.

## *3. Self-confirmation*

If everyone believes in your good intentions and shares your values, the collective security organisation might lose its internal unity and cease to be a space of peace and cooperation. To prevent this from happening, the grouping needs to define a new set of adversaries and strategic objectives. Terrorists, WMD proliferators and rogue states are all depressingly familiar examples of enemies in an era of high international security standards. The return of great power competition with the rise of China and the resurgence of Russia have created quite typical external dangers for Western countries, leading to higher cohesion levels within NATO.

All this looks like a sophisticated combination of exclusion and inclusion mechanisms that can be used concurrently. The most reliable and loyal like-minded nations are admitted to the grouping, troublemakers are deterred, everyone else is encouraged to stay away. This is how NATO pursued an open-door policy towards Central and Eastern Europe, fought terrorism in Afghanistan and nuclear proliferation in Korea, convincing Russians that they had nothing to

fear. Such a strategic mix appears viable: minimal resources were used to combat fairly weak adversaries (primarily non-state actors), whereas interstate relations remained comparatively stable. The peacefulness of a collective security system increases when it becomes more inclusive and targets few and relatively weak enemies. The grouping anyway remains exclusive in its essence, as its unity is reinforced by the Other.

The balance looks particularly delicate. If you fail to prove your good intentions, outsiders can join forces to get rid of the exclusive grouping. If you let in every nation, the security guarantees will eventually be compromised.

As of 2021, the NATO collective security system remains fairly stable, although less inclusive than in the 2000s. Russia's interventions are far from enough to completely destabilise Western security institutions, but certainly enough to maintain their unity.

### **Indivisible security and the world order**

As it is most likely impossible to maintain global hegemony or unipolarity indefinitely, major powers can simply acknowledge that they are different from one another and refrain from mutual threats. This is what the indivisible security principle calls for in general terms. However, the indivisible security model looks too weak to form the sole basis for a sustainable security architecture. The most obvious manifestation of equal security for every country is the Hobbesian war of all against all, under which nobody has access to security: the absence of some good actually eliminates the competition for it. If some good is present, the attempts to redistribute it appear inevitable.

Any military alliances embody unequal security, which is why they have no place in an inclusive world order. The key conceptual problem with that is the elusiveness of security arrangements based on presumed trust. If unconditional confidence in all international partners were a viable strategy, intelligence services, secret diplomacy and military alliances would never exist. Another challenge is that the same danger usually cannot be of the same importance for different nations. Latin American countries have no reason to care about the North Korean nuclear programme and even about Islamist terrorism, although these threats are usually defined as global. This is even more true when it comes to local and regional conflicts and challenges. Consequently, the insecurity of one nation *can* affect the well-being of all but is *unlikely* to do so on a global scale (although indivisible security theorists suggest otherwise<sup>52</sup>). Real interdependence in the security domain is currently present only in separate regions. There is room for argument about whether such interdependence exists in Asia or its subregions, and it is commonly said that it does exist in Europe.

One of the most prominent functions of collective security organisations is to ensure joint action. Building on their common identity and perceived unity, NATO members can promptly react to different international crises without the need to coordinate their activity with outsiders. The indivisible security concept needs crisis response mechanisms that would be equally effective. The proponents of inclusive indivisible security posit that interactions in the international arena should be structured around particular problems and not around permanent coalitions. This is what some scholars and Russian officials call 'network diplomacy'.<sup>53</sup> They contend that we cannot force every nation to address global and regional challenges, since security interdependence has its limits, but what we can do is provide room for the involvement of all interested parties. The problem with this is that such 'flexible coalitions' would have little capacity to act. If Russia, Iran, the US and Turkey had formed a unified coalition to fight the Islamic State in Syria in 2014, the outcome would probably have been miserable: a coalition cannot be successful having no common understanding of its goals and adversaries. Thus, when it comes to real action, inclusive flexible structures are likely to fragment into several unambiguous groupings. Repeated flexible coalitions of the same actors can evolve into permanent security organisations, taking us back to where it all began.

Furthermore, the international relations system needs actors that would create rules for it. The proponents of an inclusive world order usually favour the coordinating role of the United Nations, assuming that the decisions taken within the UN reflect the will of the international community.<sup>54</sup> In practice, the elimination of exclusive decision-making instruments would hardly make a difference. Major powers promoting new international norms would lose exclusive international platforms, such as NATO, but they would simply advance their vision, building coalitions within inclusive institutions, e.g. by means of tabling resolutions at the United Nations General Assembly. Besides, international norms and principles are nothing without their implementation: the responsibility to protect doctrine was developed and unanimously endorsed within the UN<sup>55</sup> and currently faces criticism from Russia and China for being misused to carry out humanitarian interventions.<sup>56</sup> Therefore, the very use of inclusive institutions for decision-making does not safeguard us from conflicts arising from the implementation of decisions.

The non-binding nature of 'network diplomacy' is another challenge. If conflict resolution is the business of those interested, some conflicts will simply remain unsettled. The Yemeni Civil War (2014 – present) has been a case in point: no major powers look really interested in settling the conflict, no binding security arrangements are present in the region and nobody is endeavouring to achieve reconciliation. Under a regional collective security system, such a situation would be virtually impossible.

Punishing violators is a different issue at stake. If global politics is inclusive and nobody's security can be threatened, it is unclear how to prevent abuse under the indivisible security system. Collective security organisations pre-empt both external aggression and internal turbulence: outsider nations are deterred by the collective defence posture, whereas member states can face sanctions or alienation (and the resulting lower security level). Mechanisms of the UN favoured by the proponents of indivisible security are well suited for punishing small and weak countries, having no voice in the Security Council (as I said earlier, this is in fact an exclusive collective security mechanism), whereas the Security Council's permanent members are given *carte blanche* to do whatever they intend. Oddly enough, the indivisible security concept appears to privilege world powers, simultaneously depriving smaller nations of robust security guarantees.

Despite the above-mentioned flaws, some realistic steps could bring us closer to a genuinely inclusive world order based on indivisible security.

### *1. Confidence-building measures*

If you bet on full and unconditional cooperation among nations with differing views, you need to eliminate or, at least, minimise mistrust in the international system. This would imply further empowerment of international watchdogs, some other form of 'mutual monitoring' or intergovernmental agreements with reliable verification mechanisms. These measures are unlikely to make competing nations work together within the 'network diplomacy' framework but certainly can discourage them from taking hostile action against one other. If countries are not fearful of each other, they will be less likely to make unreasonable decisions, threatening each other's security (e.g., missile defence development, military exercises, etc.). This basic premise sounds unbelievably simple, but its implementation has proved to be a highly complicated task. For example, Russia has repeatedly called into question the conclusions of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) with respect to alleged violations of the Chemical Weapons Convention by Russia and its allies,<sup>57</sup> even though the OPCW is designed as an impartial international watchdog.

### *2. Arms control*

Arms control is the most evident practical manifestation of indivisible security. When nations do not develop weapons violating each other's interests, they do not strengthen their security at the expense of the security of others. Russia viewed America's withdrawal from the ABM Treaty and its decision to develop missile defence in Europe as a violation of the indivisible security principle precisely because these actions established an exclusive security level for NATO members and were seen to undermine global strategic stability.<sup>58</sup> In the modern



context, a renewed bilateral and multilateral dialogue should include hypersonic weapons and tactical nuclear weapons: the former are particularly destabilising, whereas the latter have never been truly controlled despite their long history.

Can the indivisible security concept come real? Apparently, it has already been partly implemented in several areas of collaboration, since some challenges are essentially global and affect the interests of states with divergent policy approaches. The threat of nuclear proliferation goes beyond political tensions, which is why joint efforts in the non-proliferation domain are possible, and 'flexible coalitions' do not disintegrate into exclusive groupings. A case in point would be North Korea: although Russia is sceptical of putting strong pressure on North Korea and calls for restraint,<sup>59</sup> it did not veto the notably severe Security Council Resolution 2375<sup>60</sup> in 2017 and managed to obtain a compromise with the United States. 'Network diplomacy' can also be useful when an immediate response is not needed and when different strategies are not mutually exclusive. There are a million ways to address food security issues, some of them have proved viable, and humanity will hardly ever choose a single correct path. Another example is official development assistance (ODA): there is no agreement on the most suitable forms of development aid, but competing approaches can complement each other. Finally, international watchdogs and transparency mechanisms are already there, although their effectiveness is often questionable.

### **Reconciling the irreconcilable**

In real-world international politics, collective and indivisible security frameworks co-exist. Russia's hope for the establishment of a multipolar indivisible security system accommodating the interests of all actors in the foreseeable future is unrealistic, while the attempts to extend collective security principles throughout whole regions or even the entire world are doomed to failure.

What is the value of collective security for a future world order? First, it is the capacity to act together. Even if the strategy adopted by a grouping is controversial, a bad solution is often better than no solution. For example, if NATO had tried to find a middle ground with Russia in 1999 with respect to the Kosovo War, it would have failed to elaborate any substantive response to Milosevic's actions in Kosovo. Second, attractive and powerful groupings are pretty good at rulemaking: having agreed on some norm, they set an example for the whole international community, putting 'peer pressure' on other nations<sup>61</sup> (humanitarian interventions are a case in point). Third, collective security organisations effectively deter external threats. World powers outside a grouping cannot escape responsibility for questionable activities using their veto in the UN Security Council, as they can still face sanctions by the powerful collective security organisation and its supporters. This was the case in 2014 after Russia's annexation of Crimea, although

most non-military measures were formally adopted by the EU and some individual nations rather than by NATO. Further, collective security organisations discourage member states from imprudent actions: the United States usually tends to listen to NATO, having no incentive to alienate its closest allies, and the exceptions prove the rule. The Obama administration would probably not have intervened in Libya in 2011 if the US had not managed to secure the support of European allies through the 'Leading From Behind' strategy.<sup>62</sup>

Although the indivisible security concept is hard to implement, it certainly has a role to play. I have shown that its 'network diplomacy' can be effectively applied in areas of cooperation with common strategic objectives, such as nuclear non-proliferation, or in fields that do not require immediate concerted action, such as food security and development aid. Further, some challenges cannot be single-handedly addressed by a separate grouping, as it might not have leverage over the actors involved in a particular situation (as was the case with North Korea). Finally, arms control and confidence-building measures, which belong to the indivisible security agenda, are relevant at any time, since growing military expenditure is never good news for political leaders.

How can the two competing concepts be reconciled in the years ahead?

*1. The leading collective security organisation is here to stay*

NATO is far from perfect. The Bosnia and Herzegovina intervention, the Kosovo War and the Libya intervention are only some examples of questionable operations by the alliance and its members. However, NATO's capacity to pursue real concerted multilateral policies is worth a lot. A flawed multilateral response by the alliance seems much better than unilateral actions by individual nations or a multilateral coordination failure in the 'network diplomacy' style.

*2. Self-restraint and equal treatment will help NATO to survive*

Watson's 'laws of history' heralding the end of unilateral advantages deal with classical empires that tended to exercise complete dominance over a particular territory. In general, dominance ends when its holder abuses it. If NATO continues its open-door policy towards like-minded nations and refrains from unnecessary provocative actions towards as many outsider countries as possible, the alliance can prolong its own existence. The point of no return has not been reached yet. Terrorism, WMD proliferation and civil wars are still there, great power competition is back, so NATO does have a basis for lasting internal unity.

*3. Arms control and confidence-building will reduce the risks*

It would be utopian to expect enduring political unity of the entire world. The leading collective security organisation will anyway face resistance from out-

sider nations. New norms will be criticised, whereas NATO's approaches to conflict resolution are unlikely to satisfy every nation. Although it is possible to limit discontent, it is impossible to eliminate it. Therefore, risk reduction inevitably requires the development of arms control and confidence-building measures: even if political tensions cannot be avoided, they should not lead to unpredictable consequences. It is necessary to draw a clear line between day-to-day politics and strategic issues: the distinction between non-proliferation efforts and tactical disagreements is already there. Counter-terrorism also seems to enjoy special treatment. A similar logic might be extended to more areas of cooperation, and the indivisible security concept can be useful in this regard.

#### *4. Effectiveness should be a priority*

Inclusive cooperation in the international arena should not be at the expense of its effectiveness. Genuinely inclusive interaction can be possible if divergent efforts by different actors do not undermine each other or if actors with differing views pursue common strategic objectives. Food security, development aid and nuclear non-proliferation are only some of the areas of collaboration where these criteria could be observed. Besides, truly inclusive cooperation is indispensable if a problem cannot be tackled without the involvement of particular actors. This is the case with the North Korean nuclear programme: if we assume that military options are off the table, it is hardly possible to come to any real solution without China.

### **Indivisible security and collective security in Russia's foreign policy**

It is generally believed that Russian foreign policy after 1991 can be divided into periods that are different not only in substance but also in terms of Russia's vision of its global role, as well as ideas driving the policymaking process. The indivisible/collective security perspective calls this belief into question. Russia has certainly experienced domestic debates (especially over its relations with the West), but these debates have been present for decades. The specific mixture of competing approaches has resulted in a continuous foreign policy throughout the whole post-Soviet period, as far as its theoretical foundations are concerned. However, the relatively stable stance is riddled with internal inconsistencies due to the ongoing domestic disputes and because Russia itself is not really interested in the full-fledged implementation of its conceptual claims, which include the long-standing emphasis on indivisible security.

There is no denying the fact that in the 1990s Russia was a better partner for Western countries than in the 2010s and the early 2020s. However, the idea that Russia itself was very much different can be misleading. Russia has never adopted the 'security mindset' of NATO and EU countries. The way Russia was

governed and the way Russia approached its foreign policy in the 1990s was incompatible with Western values and approaches, just as it is now. In 1993, Russian President Boris Yeltsin ordered the shooting of the White House in Moscow, which was the residence of Russia's Parliament. In legal terms, this was nothing but a coup. Nevertheless, Yeltsin was supported by the US and its allies.<sup>63</sup> Further, Russia's military presence in the post-Soviet space is nothing new: in the early 1990s, Moscow initiated a number of peacekeeping operations in the region, whose legal basis was not always solid. However, it is only later in the 2000s that the debate on the issue gained traction.<sup>64</sup> Finally, Russia's critical attitude to NATO was already evident in the mid-1990s amid the Operation Deliberate Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina<sup>65</sup> and Washington's plans for NATO enlargement.<sup>66</sup>

What has changed since then is the way Russia reacts to political developments that it views as adverse, as well as Russia's perception of the world around it. As far as Moscow's reaction is concerned, today's Russia has many more foreign policy instruments than Russia had in the 1990s. Russia possesses hypersonic weapons that can overcome ballistic missile defence.<sup>67</sup> Russia has a system of alliances in the post-Soviet space, even though these alliances seem to be not very effective. Russia has the ability to engage in local and regional conflicts, and it allegedly can influence domestic politics in other countries.<sup>68</sup>

Russia's perception of the world around it has evolved together with the practical implementation of the collective security and indivisible security principles. The early 1990s were marked by productive cooperation with the West because Russia had two kinds of expectations. First, Russia believed it would become part of the collective security system established by privileged Western nations. This expectation manifested itself in Russia's desire to join Western institutions, such as the Group of Seven (G7) that turned into the Group of Eight (G8) after Russia's accession. Russia's relations with the West served as a new point of reference: Moscow virtually discontinued its cooperation with other former Soviet republics. Second, Russia believed that it would cease to be the target of hostile activities on the part of the West even if it failed to become a full-fledged Western nation. This is a manifestation of the indivisible security tradition.

Although Russia was included in some Western institutions, it did not become part of the Western collective security system, and this was already becoming evident in the mid-1990s. Moscow did not want to abandon its identity so as to be accepted to NATO, the EU and other Western organisations. Therefore, Russia had no option but to bet on indivisible security. In the beginning, this mechanism worked. President Yeltsin was supported by the West during grave

political crises in 1993<sup>69</sup> and 1996<sup>70</sup> and faced little criticism with respect to his foreign policy. It means that the West refrained from *reducing Russia's security* despite Russia's non-compliance with Western standards.

This approach was gradually abandoned for understandable reasons. In the 1990s, there was a realisation in the West that Communists' return to power in Russia would be a nightmare. Such a scenario was quite likely, which is why the strategy of supporting the Russian Government was the only viable option for Washington and its allies. Moreover, in the 1990s, the US funded Russia's nuclear disarmament,<sup>71</sup> which was certainly in the interest of Washington. When Russia adopted a more assertive foreign policy stance in the 2000s, the West stopped tolerating Moscow's behaviour. In fact, Russia's partners refused to implement the indivisible security principle.

Moscow definitely abandoned its attempts to join Western exclusive security organisations. As Russia was unable to join them, it started preventing others from doing so. Russia did view NATO enlargement negatively in the 1990s, but it did little to inhibit it. In the 2000s, Moscow came up with its own regional integration projects, which were initially loose and could not be taken seriously. In the late 2000s and the early 2010s, the situation changed: the West and Russia imposed a zero-sum logic on such countries as Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus, making them choose a single integration path.

In fact, Moscow has attempted to establish its own exclusive institutions but has never acknowledged this fact. Russia views the Eurasian Economic Union and other arrangements in the post-Soviet space as a way to collectively participate in international cooperation from a position of strength. NATO enlargement and EU enlargement were based (and continue to be based) on individual negotiation tracks with individual nations. This means that the process of adjustment was one-sided and that Russia had no say in determining the future of its neighbouring countries. The West approached the problem from the perspective of sovereignty: as José Manuel Barroso, then President of the European Commission, put it in 2013, the era of 'limited sovereignty was over in Europe'.<sup>72</sup> Russia approached the problem from the perspective of indivisible security: Since a collective security framework not including Moscow was expanding, this framework was viewed as a threat to Russia.

Russia has come up with alternative conceptual approaches, although these approaches have not proved viable yet. Two notions need to be mentioned in this context: 'integration of integrations' and Greater Eurasia.<sup>73</sup> Both concepts imply the establishment of a continuous Eurasian space consisting of integration projects and alliances that can work together on major issues. In the language of my paper, this means that several collective security frameworks can merge into a common space of indivisible security.

## **Indivisible security, Russia's foreign policy interests and collective benefit**

As can be seen, Moscow has been using the notion of indivisible security to justify its opposition to Western arrangements that allegedly reduce the security of Russia. What is not so obvious, however, is whether Russia would benefit from the *full-fledged* implementation of the concept. First, a world without NATO may turn out to be quite dangerous for Russia. If US troops and nuclear weapons were withdrawn from Europe, European countries would have no option but to build up their own military. Moreover, they would not necessarily be kinder to Russia than the US. As a result, Russia's security level would be further diminished.

Second, abandoning collective security organisations would be a burden for Russia in terms of conflict settlement efforts in neighbouring regions. If NATO fully withdrew from the Middle East, Russia would have to either accept a lower security level or devote its own resources to mitigating instability in the region.

Last but not least, Russia would have to engage in 'network diplomacy' (which Moscow has been advocating for recent decades). Moscow would have to refrain from unilateral military and political steps similar to those undertaken in Ukraine and Syria and cooperate with all nations who have a stake in resolving a particular issue, which appears quite difficult in the context of divergent interests.

If Russia wants to align the theoretical foundations of its policy with its behaviour, Moscow will have to acknowledge that the concept of indivisible security has only a limited applicability. The analysis in previous sections indicates that there is actually no real choice between indivisible and collective security outcomes. Russia cannot be included in NATO's 'area of peace and stability', as its opposition to the alliance's vision of the modern world order would undermine NATO's ability to pursue consistent substantive policies. Meanwhile, NATO cannot be simply dissolved, as it is the only multilateral international body capable of joint action and simultaneously the only example of an 'area of peace' based on mutual trust and common values. Waiting for a regime change in Russia is not a solution either: I have shown that the modern challenges are inherent in the very idea of collective security and do not seem to be specific to either Russia or NATO.

If policy makers aim to sustain and consolidate peace, it seems necessary to eliminate conditionality and linkages between different areas of cooperation. The logic of collective security and the logic of indivisible security should co-exist independently from each other, and neither of them can be allowed to 'hijack' world politics. When the collective security logic interferes in arms control or non-proliferation issues, strategic stability is undermined, and global risks increase, since narrow defence interests prevail over risk reduction. When indivis-

ible security and 'network diplomacy' permeate tactical issues, terrorists and militias continue to commit violations with impunity, and international rules are not enforced, as concerted action and binding arrangements give way to endless fruitless negotiations.

The decoupling of different policy areas would definitely reduce the international risks and appears to be a viable way out of the current European security crisis. If imbalances in one sphere did not spread to other areas of collaboration, the general stability of international affairs would be notably enhanced. This approach is already being widely implemented: not only non-proliferation efforts but also people-to-people contacts, as well as economic cooperation, represent the areas of Russia's relations with the West that have remained largely unaffected by political disagreements.

Some international relations experts have already called for what I am referring to as the decoupling of policy areas. Remler has come up with the idea of compartmentalisation, which again implies dividing policy concerns into areas of concern. As he put it, '[a] sustainable, effective dialogue can only be restarted if both sides tone down the rhetoric, agree not to lecture one another, and compartmentalize major demands (on the understanding that they are not dropping those demands). The process should start with an agreement to talk about specific, circumscribed topics that cannot be highly politicized, setting modest goals.'<sup>74</sup>

However, the decoupling/compartmentalisation logic comes up against holism, that is, the tendency to see politics as an integral whole. The well-known domino theory implies that 'a defeat or retreat on one issue <...> is likely to produce <...> further demands on the state,'<sup>75</sup> whereas the 'holistic logic' assumes that even cooperation in a particular domain can give undue advantage to the adversary in other areas. New START is America's unilateral disarmament,<sup>76</sup> the delivery of Russian gas to Europe enables the Kremlin to pursue a more hawkish foreign policy<sup>77</sup> – such ideas are all manifestations of this approach. The result is the politicisation of almost all areas of Russia's relations with the West, which makes the development of productive cooperation a highly difficult task. The more outsider nations are marginalised and antagonised by the leading collective security grouping, the more quickly will this grouping cease to exist as a result of growing external pressure.

Both Russia and the West should finally recognise that their concepts of security have limits. Such a recognition would certainly increase the likelihood of achieving a mutually beneficial settlement.

## **Conclusion**

In this paper, I have tried to add to the conceptualisation of collective security and indivisible security, taking into account the developments of recent

decades in Russia's relations with the West. I define collective security as an exclusive arrangement based on providing security for a limited number of nations meeting some specific criteria. Collective security organisations are good at ensuring joint action, creating regional and global rules, and punishing those who violate the rules. However, exclusive organisations face the challenges of maintaining political unity and countering those outsiders who do not have the incredible level of security enjoyed by the insiders and want to disrupt such an organisation.

To maintain their unity and prolong their existence, collective security institutions can use the strategy of luring, the appeasement strategy, and the strategy of self-confirmation. The use of these three approaches helps exclusive organisations both maintain their unity and prevent the emergence of severe external threats.

I define indivisible security as an inclusive arrangement building on the provision of equal security for all nations without any specific preconditions. An indivisible security framework can serve as a basis for confidence-building measures and arms control, but it is a bad framework when it comes to problem areas where actors have divergent interests. Therefore, it is very poor at ensuring joint action, rule-making, and addressing conflicts that are of little interest to major powers. I demonstrate that many of Russia's foreign policy steps of recent decades have been consistent with the indivisible security logic, contrary to the belief that the conceptual basis of Russia's strategy has changed significantly since the 1990s.

I show that neither collective security nor indivisible security can serve as the sole basis for the modern world order and come up with the idea of decoupling different policy areas from each other and applying the two concepts to areas where they can be really useful. Further, I state my disagreement with the holistic approach to international politics, since it makes any dialogue on selected issues virtually impossible.

The complete and irrevocable cessation of cooperation in retaliation for any non-existential threat is a poor strategy, as it does not pay off and can undermine the world order based on cooperation. If more and more countries face exclusion and marginalisation, the status-quo coalition will eventually disappear. An indivisible security order would not be any better, since it is apparently too weak to maintain the rules-based international system. However, there is another way: the leading collective security organisation can further carry out its indispensable functions, settling conflicts and ensuring concerted action. In doing so, it does not need to antagonise important actors of global politics, excluding them from decision-making processes in areas of international cooperation where the logic of indivisible security appears applicable. If retaliatory measures in response to wrongdoing remain limited in scope and if outsider nations feel



secure, the international winning coalition will be large enough to maintain stable interstate relations.



## Endnotes

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Research article

# Global Maritime Fulcrum: Indonesia's Middle Power Strategy Between Belt And Road Initiatives (BRI) and Free-Open Indo Pacific (FOIP)

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## Abstract

*The purpose of this article is to correlate Indonesia's global maritime fulcrum (GMF) as Indonesia's middle power strategy to its response to the two geopolitical strategies of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of China and the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) of the Quad (the United States, India, Japan and Australia). This article used the process-tracing method to examine the information sourced from journal articles, news media outlets, government press releases and other resources. The article unfolds in four sections. The first explains the background of why the global maritime fulcrum was chosen as Indonesia's middle power strategy response to the BRI and FOIP. The*

*second explains how Indonesia uses the GMF as its middle power strategy. The third part explores how the middle power strategy through the GMF policy responds to the BRI. The last part elaborates on Indonesia's strategy when responding to the FOIP. It concludes that it is prevalent that Indonesia uses the GMF as its middle power strategy when responding to the BRI and FOIP.*

**Keywords:** *Indonesia, global maritime fulcrum, middle power, Belt and Road Initiatives, free-open Indo Pacific*

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The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) employed by the Chinese government and the Free-Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) of the Quad are two geopolitical strategies used to exercise their influence outside of their respective regions. One of the affected regions is Southeast Asia as it is strategically located for use as an international production chain for Chinese ambitions. The Indo-Pacific area is where the US, Japan, India and Australia are looking forward to enhancing their collaborations with the countries inside the area. Indonesia, as the largest country in Southeast Asia with a prominent role as an Association Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) leader, tries to balance the geopolitical influence both from China and the Quad. The purpose of this article is to explain the role of the global maritime fulcrum (GMF) as a middle power strategy in response to the BRI and FOIP employed by the major powers. The GMF itself serves as Indonesia's governmental policy to strengthen the state's maritime connectivity since it has previously lacked attention from the previous government. Furthermore, this article explains why the GMF is the chosen policy employed by the Indonesian government to respond to the BRI and FOIP. This leads to the initial assumption that Indonesia, as a middle power country, uses a middle power strategy through the GMF to cope with the two geopolitical influences.

## **Background**

The initial research suggests that Indonesia has to face both the BRI and FOIP, which are employed by China and the Quad respectively. Indonesia's response is to direct the two geopolitical strategies in line with Indonesia's ambition through the GMF. Since becoming president in 2014, Joko Widodo has considered private investors and companies from China to assist Indonesia in improving its connectivity and state infrastructure.<sup>1</sup> After attending the BRI Summit in Beijing on May 2017, Jokowi asked the Coordinator of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Luhut Pandjaitan, to lead the team in preparing a list of projects to go under the BRI framework.<sup>2</sup>

On 26 April 2019, Jokowi signed the 23 Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) with China in order for them to collaborate on infrastructure projects in

Indonesia.<sup>3</sup> Xi Jinping also suggested that Indonesia has a strategic geographic position that could enhance the BRI projects when he announced the Maritime Silk Road (MSR) Program part of the BRI in October 2013.<sup>4</sup> Both the GMF and BRI focus on connectivity improvement. From the perspective of MSR, China wants to connect its trade route to Europe through Asia and Africa. When Jokowi stated the GMF strategy, it was in parallel with Chinese intentions. They are also willing to connect several islands in Indonesia.<sup>5</sup> Connectivity serves as a crucial aspect in both countries' cooperation, referring to Indonesia with its GMF ambition and China with its BRI project. Therefore the GMF and BRI work in synergy and complement one another. This means that each party is looking for potential cooperation and this makes Indonesia an important partner for China and *vice versa*, which helps to fulfill their ambitions.<sup>6</sup>

On 22 September 2015, Xie Feng, the Chinese Ambassador for Indonesia, looked at the synergy between the GMF and BRI that could open up more opportunities. First, the GMF and BRI complement each other. Both frameworks have the same purpose, namely economic development by optimising the maritime sector with a focus on infrastructure and connectivity. The second point is that it could strengthen the relations between the two countries. Both have already achieved a consensus regarding the development strategy including a maritime partnership. China has been involved in the development and expansion of thirty ports in East Indonesia and it is willing to be a partner in the rebuilding and expansion of Tanjung Priok port in Jakarta.<sup>7</sup>

The relations between the GMF and BRI were stated in 'the Joint Statement on Strengthening Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Indonesia' on 26 March 2015. Both states agree to develop the cooperation that fosters the implementation of various programs such as 'the China-Indonesia joint table-top exercise of maritime search and rescue' and 'the China-Indonesia center for ocean and climate'. This is in addition to continuing to cooperate for the purpose of cruise safety, maritime security, maritime search and rescue, and maritime research and protection.<sup>8</sup> One of the GMFs' major projects that has successfully gained support from the Chinese government is *tol laut*. The purpose of *tol laut* is to increase the sea connectivity between the main ports in Indonesia such as Belawan in North Sumatra, Tanjung Priok in Jakarta, Tanjung Perak in Surabaya as well as the ports in Makassar South Sulawesi and Sorong in Papua.<sup>9</sup>

During Jokowi's second term Evan Laksmana argued that the GMF was absent in his inauguration speech along with the topic regarding foreign policy. Jokowi's priorities for his second term are about trade and investment, citizen protection, sovereignty, regional and global leadership and diplomatic infrastructure. The hallmark of the GMF itself would not become Jokowi's grand



strategy. Laksmana suggests that GMF is not a well-researched agenda in the very first place, it is only a political campaign platform used in order that people would assume that Jokowi has a grand agenda for Indonesia in terms of foreign affairs.<sup>10</sup> To some degree these stances are correct; however, the GMF is still being pursued at various different levels. Coordinating the Ministry for Maritime Affairs and Investment for instance started to make Kebijakan Kelautan Indonesia (KKI) or Indonesian Maritime Policy a blueprint and roadmap for a long term policy. The name of the document is Konsep Haluan Maritim (Maritime Direction Concept). The ministry already arranged the working group and had intense communication with the Presidential Staff Office along with the National Development Planning Agency in formulating this policy. The ministry also conducted a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) to study maritime policy in depth. The document is expected to be released in September 2021.<sup>11</sup> In another aspect, *tol laut* as one of the hallmarks of Indonesia's cooperation with foreign countries such as China also made significant progress until 2021. The Ministry of Transportation suggested that in 2021 they are able to add four routes for a total of thirty routes connected by the *tol laut*.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, it is safe to assume that the GMF is still an ongoing project, since the relevant ministry has been trying to establish the foundation to develop GMF policy in a deeper manner as well as continue works on the relevant projects for the GMF itself.

When it comes to Indonesia and the Quad who brought in the idea of the FOIP, the cooperation under the FOIP framework is still being established and settled. The FOIP was just starting to gain attention among Indonesian policymakers when there was an ASEAN informal summit in Singapore in April 2018. Indonesia put forward the 'Indo-Pacific Cooperation' strategy that adheres to four basic principles. The first is that Indonesia wants the cooperation to be inclusive, transparent and comprehensive. Second, it should bring in benefits for all of the countries involved in the region. Third, the cooperation should uphold peace, stability and prosperity. The last is that it should respect international laws and ASEAN Centrality.<sup>13</sup>

As the FOIP is still evolving and the shape of the framework is still being worked on, the relations between the GMF and FOIP can be seen from each Quad member's cooperation with Indonesia. As Indonesia prioritises its infrastructure development, US investors have started to invest in Indonesia through the US International Development Finance Corporation. This is a development bank that provides financial solutions for infrastructure, digital connectivity and energy in developing countries. This kind of opportunity was responded to by Indonesia through Luhut Panjaitan as Indonesia's Coordinating Minister for Maritime and Investment, stating that as a maritime country, it is necessary for Indonesia to accept the investment for the development of the outer islands in order to protect Indonesia's sovereignty and security.<sup>14</sup>

Furthermore, when it comes to the Indonesian-Australian cooperation, it shows that the cooperation between these two countries also focuses on Indonesia's GMF ambitions. On 6 January 2020, both countries signed a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement. The purpose of this is to increase their level of cooperation in the domains of the economy, trade and investment. Prior to this cooperation, Indonesia and Australia signed the Joint Declaration on Maritime Cooperation in Sydney on 26 February 2017. The cooperation was realised here in the form of a Plan of Action in 2018.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, with India, Indonesia also ensured its cooperation concerning maritime issue by making a Joint Statement on Maritime Cooperation on 12 December 2016 followed by the Shared Vision for Maritime Cooperation on 30 May 2018. Recently, on 6 July 2020, both countries signed the MoU on Maritime Safety and Security to enhance both countries' cooperation in the maritime sector.<sup>16</sup>

Last but not least, the relations between Indonesia and Japan also focus on maritime issues. Both countries agreed to establish a bilateral maritime forum, the Indonesia-Japan Maritime Forum (IJMF), on 21 December 2016. This cooperation marks the same commitment from both countries to the free and open navigation of the sea. This forum also covers collaboration related to maritime safety, security, economic, infrastructure, education and training. Both countries also agreed to establish a fish market and port infrastructure development in Indonesia's outer island through the Exchange of Notes (EN) as part of the Program for Development of Fisheries Sector in the Outer Islands.<sup>17</sup>

## **Literature review**

To understand the conception of Indonesia's middle power, the authors further research on several literatures that explained the same topic. We then classified these literatures into three categories: (1) what kind of middle power Indonesia has; (2) how Indonesia's middle power strategy is evolving; and (3) how Indonesia uses the middle power strategy in relation with other countries.

First, what kind of middle power does Indonesia have? Karim argues that Indonesia seeks to connect the status-seeking behaviour of middle power with the state's foreign policy agenda.<sup>18</sup> In other words, middle power is a concept of international status that states its aim to pursue through the enactment of role conceptions. It is not merely a function of good international citizenship or material capability. In line with Karim, Kusumaningprang also argues that rather than its material capabilities, Indonesia's long standing history of middle power activism is the foundation for characterising Indonesia as an extraverted middle power.<sup>19</sup> This status is then grounded in Indonesia's constitution to institutionalise the international obligations.

Second, how is Indonesia's middle power strategy evolving? Azra explains that Indonesia's posture as a middle power has been up and down.<sup>20</sup> Indonesia rose in the international arena under President Sukarno (1945-1966) and President Suharto (1967-1998). Meanwhile, Indonesia's role in regional and international affairs declined considerably during the early years of the post-Suharto era (1998-2004), although there were several attempts to restore Indonesia's prominence as a middle power under President Abdurrahman Wahid (1999-2001) and President Megawati Sukarnoputri (2001-2004). During the administration of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2004-2009 and 2009-2014), Indonesia finally showed itself eager to play the middle power's role in the international arena. Hidayatullah then argues that since its independence, Indonesia has persistently conducted the role of middle power Assembler by establishing regional leadership in Southeast Asia, and then adopted the role of middle power Advocate since Yudhoyono's presidency.<sup>21</sup> Besides that, Alvian et al. identify the change of Indonesia's middle power diplomacy strategy under the presidency of President Yudhoyono and President Jokowi from an outward looking to inward looking orientation.<sup>22</sup>

Third, how does Indonesia use the middle power strategy in relation with other countries? Beeson and Lee argue that ASEAN remains a major consideration for Indonesia to exert its middle power diplomacy.<sup>23</sup> But, Indonesia is also increasingly seen as a state with the potential to play a role beyond Southeast Asia. Hellendorf further explains that ASEAN's countries—including Indonesia—tend to risk tolerant, rather than risk-averse, in running their middle power strategies.<sup>24</sup> Indonesia seeks to defend a broad commitment to ASEAN-led multilateralism and its self-interest through targeted policies with other countries. For example, through China's rise and assertiveness in the South China Sea, Indonesia has derived diplomatic and political benefits, such as supporting the ASEAN-led discussion and negotiation process with China about the dispute on the South China Sea. Furthermore, Sriyanto argues that Indonesia's middle-powermanship can be seen through growing relations between Indonesia and China.<sup>25</sup> With creating the GMF, Indonesia seeks to build domestic connectivity from Chinese investment through the BRI program.

This paper then closes to the third category about how Indonesia uses the middle power strategy in relation with other countries. But different from Beeson and Lee, Hellendorf, and Sriyanto who focused on ASEAN or China—including the BRI—this paper brings the BRI and FOIP together. Not merely Indonesia's strategy in broad, this paper is more focused on the GMF as a middle power strategy of Indonesia in relations with the BRI and FOIP. Furthermore, we combine three middle power approaches to analyse it, namely an hierarchy approach, a functional approach and a behavioural approach. Furthermore, this

paper aims to show that Indonesia acts as a middle power through creating the GMF. This certainly matters because through the GMF, Indonesia has begun to show its maritime capacity more concretely. Indonesia then seeks to encourage relations between other grand maritime program/concepts, namely the BRI and FOIP. This means that Indonesia is not likely to use the GMF as competitor, or against the BRI and FOIP. Indeed, Indonesia tends to gaining advantages as much as possible in relation between these two, including prestige and investment to build infrastructures. Also, Indonesia will not disengage from ASEAN because Indonesia still has a prominent role in this organisation. It can provide an opportunity for Indonesia to influence any decisions within the ASEAN.

### **Global maritime fulcrum as Indonesia's middle power strategy: Theoretical approach**

As the previous explanation suggests, it shows that both with China and the Quad, Indonesia prioritises its policy through the GMF when dealing with the BRI and FOIP. It can be assumed that Indonesia is exercising its middle power strategy. The concept of middle power was brought in by Jokowi during his presidential campaign in 2014. He explained that the role of Indonesia as a middle power should be achieved through its selective involvement in regional and global issues. Indonesia took the opportunities offered by China and the Quad and directed them to fit Indonesia's interests.<sup>26</sup> This is also in parallel with the three strands approach in middle power states, namely an hierarchy that focus on states' material capacity or quantifiable indicators of powers, functionality that focus on states' interest in specific areas which offer more benefit than other areas and behaviour that focuses on states' behaviour for being a good international citizen. The first approach, hierarchy, closely relates to the state's material capability between great powers and small powers.<sup>27</sup> It combines the developmental, economic, social and military indicators that determine the state's ranking within the international system.<sup>28</sup> Second is the functional approach, assuming that their material capability can be used to become involved in the international area. Middle power states use their power to influence and make sure of its responsibilities regarding certain functions in international relations.<sup>29</sup> Middle power states only focus on specific areas that offer better value and results. The third is the behavioural approach which argues that middle power states have the characteristic of behaving as a good international citizen that supports multilateralism, supporting the international order or having a role as a mediator in disputes.<sup>30</sup> This approach makes it clear that a middle power state cannot act alone. However, it is able to have a systemic impact within small groups through international institutions.<sup>31</sup>

### *Hierarchy approach*

According to Gilley and O'Neil, the hierarchy approach—or positional approach—can be described as the material power capabilities that middle powers possess relative to both great powers and small and weak states.<sup>32</sup> It is characterised by its focus on quantifiable indicators of power between states relating to differences in population size, military expenditures, strategic geography position, gross domestic product, etc. The use of quantitative indicators has several strengths, such as the ability to measure states' power in an objective manner and facilitating comparisons across states. In other words, middle power states can use their abundant resources to attract other countries and build beneficial cooperation with them. Therefore, we use resources powers as the operationalisation from the hierarchy approach.

In this case, Indonesia is a middle power state that possesses abundant resources, especially natural resources. One of Indonesia's prominent capabilities is its vast maritime territory and geographic strategic position. This resulted in Jokowi stating his policy of serving as a global maritime fulcrum in order to make Indonesia a world maritime power. Indonesia is the biggest state in Southeast Asia and the biggest archipelagic country in the world. Because of its strategic location between the Indian and Pacific Oceans and between the Asian and Australian continents, this makes Indonesia a contested area with a great power interest.<sup>33</sup> The economic, political and military dynamics within the Asia-Pacific region and with developed states such as the United States (US), India, Australia, China and Japan heavily rely on Indonesia's stability, foreign policy and geopolitical thinking since Indonesia is also an ASEAN leader.<sup>34</sup> Indonesia has a strong maritime capability compared to smaller powers, thus meaning that Indonesia has confidence when projecting themselves on the international arena through global maritime fulcrum initiatives. This serves as a prominent step towards becoming world maritime power.

### *Functional approach*

The second is the functional approach that emphasises the middle power responsibility on certain issues that relates to gaining special influence within their functional area that is mirrored in its national interest. It suggests that middle powers tend to pursue their foreign policy goals in specific areas that offer the best return, often referred to as 'niche diplomacy'. According to Gareth Evans, niche diplomacy is the effort to concentrate resources in specific areas best able to generate returns worth having, rather than trying to cover the field.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, middle power states must concentrate their resources on addressing issues that are ignored by small powers and which are not dominated by the major powers. In this case, Indonesia's 'niche area' is maritime, considering that

Indonesia has a vast maritime area. Through the GMF, Indonesia has realised its responsibility as the biggest maritime state in the world. The president has also declared that he will rebuild the maritime culture and improve the state policy towards the maritime sector. On 20 February 2017, Jokowi issued Presidential Decree No.16 about Indonesia Maritime Policy. The policy serves as general instruction for the maritime policy and its implementation through programs and activities within the ministry or non-ministry government. It is expected to help implementing the GMF faster.<sup>36</sup>

Jokowi is the first president who officially published a maritime doctrine, resulting in the other international actors respecting the government's efforts to make Indonesia a maritime power.<sup>37</sup> The GMF serves as Indonesia's vision as a sovereign maritime state and it is capable of providing a platform for peace-building and security both at the regional and international levels. The GMF has seven pillars that can achieve this purpose: (1) the development of human and marine resources, (2) maritime security and law enforcement, (3) institutional and maritime governance, (4) the development of a maritime economy, (5) the management of maritime peace and protection and (6) the maritime culture and maritime diplomacy.<sup>38</sup> This means that Indonesia not only wants to focus this policy at the domestic level but that it also tries to project this policy in order to be a mediator of maritime conflict between neighbouring states. The status of Indonesia as a middle power has received attention and recognition from international actors.

### *Behavioural approach*

The third is the behavioural approach that refers to the state's specific behaviour in international affairs, such as being a good international citizen, supporting multilateralism, supporting international order or serving as intermediaries in disputes. The label of 'good international citizen' triggers different assumptions from many scholars. James Souter argues that to become a good international citizen, states must comply with common rules and values including human rights, multilateralism, international law, etc.<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, Charalampos Efstathopoulos, Jeremy R. Youde, Trace Hoffmann Slagter, Robert W. Cox, John W. Holmes, Andrew Linklater, Robert W. Murray and Ronald Behringer argue that foreign policy of middle powers is not purely driven by altruism—rather these states are also acting instrumentally.<sup>40</sup> In other words, the foreign policy of a good international citizen represents a middle ground between realism and idealism. These states do not always act kindly because it depends on the situation they are facing and on the interests they possess. Furthermore, middle powers also demonstrate a strong preference for multilateralism as they can overcome their lack of bargaining power at the bilateral level.<sup>41</sup>

Through the GMF, Jokowi stressed that Indonesia's power projection is 'Indo-Pacific Power'. The interconnection between the Pacific and Indian Oceans has served as Indonesia's main playing field for its foreign policy. Indonesia's leadership in the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) between 2015 and 2017 provided it with the opportunity to expand its influence within the region.<sup>42</sup> Indonesia also acts as a Southeast Asia leader through its agreement with several countries regarding their maritime borders. This includes discussing the border agreement Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) with Australia and Papua New Guinea. Indonesia is also conducting an agreement on the continental shelf with various countries such as Malaysia, Australia, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, Singapore and India. As a middle power state, Indonesia is also making an effort to provide multilateral solutions regarding international disputes by trying to foster compromise. It can be seen from Indonesia's role that they have tried to resolve the South China Sea dispute through a workshop.<sup>43</sup> Therefore it can be said that through the GMF, Indonesia's maritime diplomacy is stronger than before.

### **The global maritime fulcrum as a middle power strategy in relation to the Belt and Road Initiative**

To understand the relationship between Indonesia's GMF and China's BRI, the authors have used several variables that are entailed in middle power theory. In this analysis, we have tried to use three approaches in relation to middle power theory—hierarchy, function and behaviour—to analyse the relation between the GMF and BRI. These three approaches have been further operationalised into four variables which are related to Indonesia's status as a middle power country such as: (1) having enough resources and power to attract the attention of major powers, (2) implementing niche diplomacy that is only focused on specific areas or issues that can bring in greater advantages regarding national interests, (3) building a constructive role as a middle power with the responsibility of keeping the region safe and strengthening the security of the region and (4) behaving as a good multilateralist to find an appropriate solution in order to resolve regional problems.

#### *Having resource powers*

A middle power is a state which is big or rich enough to attract the avarice of great powers.<sup>44</sup> The state supposes that its material capabilities can encourage other states to recognise its existence and prestige in the international area. Through the creation of the GMF, Indonesia wants to show the world that Indonesia is an essential Indo-Pacific power and that it has a strategic geographic location with the Indian Ocean in the west, the South China Sea in the north and the Pacific Ocean in the east. Indonesia's strategic location is known as a 'cross

road location' and it acts as a 'strategic funnel' between the Indo and Pacific components. Furthermore, regional geopolitics nowadays are characterised by the resurgence of maritime power in Asia and beyond, thus choke points in Indonesian waters have nowadays become critical components, specifically the Malacca Strait, Sunda Strait, Lombok Strait and Makassar Strait.<sup>45</sup>

Indonesia has 17,500 islands. It has the second longest coastline in the world of around 99,093 km and a sea area of about 3,273,810 km.<sup>46</sup> Due to its strategic location, Indonesia is often regarded as an integral part of the BRI. Xi Jinping was convinced that Indonesia has a strategic position when he announced the 21<sup>st</sup> Maritime Silk Road program in October 2013.<sup>47</sup> China's desire to create maritime connections from its coastal area with countries from Asia to Africa and even reaching up into Europe has determined Indonesia's strategic position to be a crucial point. Several strategic sea-lanes of communication under Indonesian jurisdiction could support China's global maritime connections.<sup>48</sup> Xi Jinping and Joko Widodo even acknowledged that China's BRI and Indonesia's GMF were highly complementary because both focused on connectivity, especially maritime connectivity.<sup>49</sup>

Despite its positive responses to the BRI, Indonesia has refrained from fully engaging with this China-led initiative.<sup>50</sup> Indonesia has a lot of important resources—both natural and human—and it is located in a strategic position, thus Indonesia just needs an investment from China to develop its performance. The Indonesian government seeks to optimise the advantages and minimise any risks by directing the Chinese investments into B2B (business to business) activities. In this effort, the government plays the role of facilitator in the investment and development process.<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, Fitriani argued that there are several reasons that explain why Indonesia has responded prudently to Chinese offers: (1) the concept of the BRI not being clear until very recently, (2) Indonesia does not expect to be subjugated to any foreign power because of its past experience of Western colonisation, (3) Indonesia has had some uneasy economic interactions with China, as the influx of Chinese goods can endanger small and medium enterprises in Indonesia, (4) Indonesia has questioned the quality of Chinese investments, (5) China and the Chinese have been used for political purposes in Indonesia rooted in Suharto's regime and (6) there has been skepticism and curiosity regarding China's real intentions because China's assertive behaviours are sometimes problematic.<sup>52</sup>

### *Implementing niche diplomacy*

Niche diplomacy can be defined as the middle powers' capacity to increase its global influence through the identification of niche areas in its regional and global governance.<sup>53</sup> Rather than grasping at many areas, middle powers that



only focus on the specific area or issue have become of interest as it offers greater advantages.<sup>54</sup> The implementation of niche diplomacy can be identified by Indonesia's GMF behaviour when building relations with China's BRI. Because the GMF and BRI share a common objective to enhance connectivity, Indonesia views that the BRI will provide good opportunities to develop its connectivity and infrastructure.<sup>55</sup> Indonesia needs a huge investment from foreign partners to build its domestic infrastructure because the rate of foreign investment in Indonesia in terms of its total GDP is relatively low compared to neighbouring countries.<sup>56</sup>

During Jokowi's visit to China against the backdrop of attending the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in 2014, the two sides agreed to enhance their cooperation, particularly in the areas of maritime development and infrastructure.<sup>57</sup> Therefore it can be said that the 'niche area' determined by Indonesia is the BRI's infrastructure investment project. Indonesia then became the largest Southeast Asian recipient of infrastructure investment from China as the country received an investment amount of \$87 billion in repayable loans for the purpose of developing its economy.<sup>58</sup> This investment has been used to enhance many domestic projects in Indonesia such as the construction of railways and highways, oil and gas pipelines, power networks and maritime infrastructures. Maritime infrastructures are very important to Indonesia as an archipelagic country in order to connect the different islands.

When invited to the Center for Education and Training of the Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Xie Feng—the Chinese Ambassador to Indonesia—stated that Indonesia and China can further strengthen its bilateral cooperation in maritime infrastructure and connectivity development.<sup>59</sup> Indonesia's Medium-Term Development Plan 2015-2019 and the Blue Book 2015-2019 have listed several major infrastructure projects in Indonesia, such as the construction of bridges, ships and sea ports. In this plan, China will contribute and cooperate with Indonesia to implement these projects. Recently, Chinese corporations have actively contributed to the development of over 30 ports in Eastern Indonesia. China is willing to be a partner in the redevelopment and extension of Tanjung Priok Port in Jakarta, participating in the planning and design of the highways, railways and sea port facilities in addition to helping reduce cargo dwelling time.<sup>60</sup> Besides that, China is also ready to cooperate with Indonesia in the development of the Batam-Bintan cross-sea bridge. These Chinese investments in Indonesian maritime infrastructure projects can strengthen the maritime connectivity between its islands, thus smoothing the flow of goods and commodities and reducing the inequality between the Indonesian regions.

### *Building constructive roles*

Middle power countries usually declare themselves to be a middle power. This declaration is an early step for countries seeking to increase their active role in international affairs.<sup>61</sup> By adopting functionalism, these countries then believe that their status in the international system has risen. Instrumentally, it offered possibilities for countries to build their constructive role within the specific framework.<sup>62</sup> Its responsibility thus differs middle powers from small powers or minor actors. This is because middle powers are convinced that they must keep the region safe, spreading a positive atmosphere between neighbouring countries.

Declaring itself to be a middle power was committed by Joko Widodo in his early administration as Indonesia's President. Further implementation was then carried out through the formation of the GMF as part of Indonesia's commitment and effort to become a global maritime power. Indonesia does not only act as a centre of maritime dynamics and economic activities between the two continents and oceans, but it also seeks to take a greater responsibility by strengthening the domestic and regional maritime domain.<sup>63</sup> These efforts are supported by the Chinese Foreign Minister, Wang Yi, who stated that Indonesia's GMF and China's BRI aim to strengthen maritime connectivity and enhance the capacity of Southeast Asian countries to maximise security and the management of their maritime resources.<sup>64</sup> The GMF was therefore an important instrument for Indonesia to use to strengthen its middle power capabilities and thus to increase Indonesia's constructive role in the region's security.

In relation to the BRI, the GMF seeks to develop the discussion and cooperation ongoing in areas of maritime security. In 2004, the Indonesian Maritime Security Agency, *Bakorkamla*, executed defense diplomacy with China.<sup>65</sup> This activity was accomplished through the formation of MoU about satellite sensing to monitor the water area. In August 2018, Indonesia and China also discussed strengthening the defense industry cooperation in the annual meeting of the 7<sup>th</sup> Defense Industry Cooperation Meeting RI-China.<sup>66</sup> Two months later, these countries then discussed security cooperation again. In this session, the Vice Chairman of China's Central Military and Indonesian Defense Minister held a meeting to strengthen the military cooperation between the two countries. Indonesia and China expected that this meeting to further strengthen the cooperation in terms of maritime security, joint military exercise, personal training and multilateral coordination. Ryamizard Ryacudu—Indonesian Defense Minister—even said that Indonesia is ready to engage in working with China to maintain the regional peace.<sup>67</sup>

### *Behaving as a good multilateralist*

Middle powers tend to act as good multilateralists where they have national desires and the capability to implement specific behavior.<sup>68</sup> In this context, the role of any middle powers should not be viewed as ‘a fixed universal’ but instead as ‘something which must rethink [be rethought] continuously in the dynamics of international system.’<sup>69</sup> Middle powers seek to find a multilateral and negotiated solution in order to solve an international problem.<sup>70</sup> This behaviour causes these countries to be regarded as good multilateralists or good international citizens.

Through the GMF, Indonesia has tried to label itself a good multilateralist by connecting the interests of the BRI and ASEAN. Interestingly, the BRI emerged at the time ASEAN was executing its own programmes about the masterplan for ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) as a programme to improve intra-ASEAN connectivity, thus these two initiatives complement each other.<sup>71</sup> Indonesia then became regarded by China as an important actor for the purpose of bridging its interest with ASEAN because Indonesia is the ‘de-facto’ leader of ASEAN.<sup>72</sup> At the same time, Indonesia also has a strategic interest in securing its regional position and managing the building of integrated connectivity under the centrality of ASEAN. This country used the BRI to promote close regional trade and investment linkage in relation to the improvement of interregional physical connectivity.<sup>73</sup> As a good multilateralist, Indonesia used the Chinese investment to develop its maritime infrastructure in order to increase the regional connectivity and to smooth the flows of goods to and from neighbouring countries.

### **Global maritime fulcrum as a middle power strategy in relation to the free-open Indo Pacific**

The early concept of the FOIP was introduced on 22 August 2007 by Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, in his speech at the Indian Parliament about ideas of Indo-Pacific which is called the ‘Confluence of the Two Seas’. Different from the BRI that possessed a clear framework, the FOIP is not yet settled. In this speech, Abe initiated to encourage a coalition between Japan, the United States, Australia, and India—then referred as the Quad.<sup>74</sup> In November 2017, President Trump then declared the FOIP at the APEC meeting. This concept became a reiteration of the liberal hegemonic order that was brought by the United States. Therefore, the FOIP is not merely Japanese strategy, but it’s the Quad’s strategy. It came up in Abe’s speech, and the implementation of that concept is committed by the Quad—especially the United States.

Different from the BRI that has a clear framework and implementation, the concept of the FOIP is not yet settled. There are no concrete steps from the Quad to implement the FOIP optimally. Therefore, we use different indicators

to analyse Indonesia's middle power strategy towards the BRI and FOIP. The authors then argue that the '5Cs' from John Ravenhill is more appropriate to identify Indonesia's middle power strategy in relations with the FOIP. The 5Cs include capacity, concentration, creativity, coalition-building and credibility.<sup>75</sup> This is also in parallel with the work of Andrew F. Cooper, Richard A. Higgott and Kim R. Nossal.<sup>76</sup>

The first characteristic is capacity, which refers to how the capacity of a middle power state relies heavily on their capability to share ideas through diplomacy. The second is concentration, which refers to the uniqueness of middle power states as they concentrate their foreign policy priorities concerning the issues or areas that benefit them. The third is creativity, as they possess intellectual and entrepreneurial leadership that could shape the perspectives of other states within international organisations. The fourth is coalition building, which explains the middle power's capability to form coalitions that could have a similar perspective with the ideas brought to them. The fifth is credibility which refers to how the initiatives can be accepted without ambition to obtain the maximum benefits. Credibility also refers to the consistency of the initiated policies.

Given its strategic position and capabilities, Indonesia has been known as *primus inter pares* in Southeast Asia. This means that formally Indonesia is equal to other Southeast Asian states but with an important position through its historical involvement in the region. It is regarded as a natural leader of ASEAN in the dynamics and institutional-building process.<sup>77</sup> In the last few decades, there has been a tendency to enhance Indonesia's role as global middle power. During Joko Widodo's presidency (2014-), Indonesia's foreign policy has been directed towards regional power but selective in its global involvement by prioritising matters related to national interests.<sup>78</sup> This can be seen as middle power behaviour associated with the so-called 'niche' diplomacy through the concentration of its activities. One of the prominent visions of the Joko Widodo presidency is the vision intending to make Indonesia part of the global maritime axis. The GMF is mainly inward-looking but there are still outward-looking aspects, especially in response to regional dynamics. As the US-China rivalry is becoming tense in the region, Indonesia needs to be responsive in order to not get trapped by their strategic rivalry. The US and the other Quad countries are coming in due to the FOIP in response to China's BRI. This forces the countries in the region to take a side between the US and China. However, Indonesia, as a middle power, especially in response to the FOIP, has its own strategies within the GMF framework which will be explored later.

## **The 5Cs analysis and Indonesia's strategy in response to the FOIP: AOIP as an extension of the GMF**

In order to analyse this matter further, we need to identify Indonesia's middle power position in relation to its response to the FOIP. In line with the functional approach and behavioural approach, there is a need to identify the middle power through their diplomatic activities and the manner in which they pursue their foreign policy objectives. The authors argue that the '5Cs' can be the appropriate indicators to analyse the relations between Indonesia's GMF and BRI-FOIP.

### *Capacity*

Capacity refers to the middle power's capabilities which heavily rely on its diplomatic capacity rather than military power. This is important in relations as it concerns how they disseminate and influence others with their ideas. Indonesia as a middle power also emphasises its diplomatic capacity when promoting the idea of the Indo-Pacific based on ASEAN centrality. How it is done will be explored through its relations with the other four 'Cs'.

### *Concentration*

Indonesia during the Joko Widodo presidency prioritised the Indo-Pacific region and its objective of being part of a global maritime axis. This can be seen as a form of concentration in which the middle power will prioritise their foreign policy objectives which produce the desired results. While superpowers have the ability to focus on many areas, middle powers need to concentrate their foreign policy agenda due to their lack of capability compared to superpowers. This is called 'niche' diplomacy.<sup>79</sup> As Joko Widodo came into power in July 2014, Indonesia emphasised being a maritime power given its strategic location between the Indian and Pacific Ocean, thus stressing its focus on the Indo-Pacific through the GMF.<sup>80</sup> The Indo-Pacific is seen of as a geostrategic concern for Indonesia in which the strategic rivalry between the US and China will only divide or polarise the region. The goal is peace, stability and development in the region. South-east Asia is located between the Indian and Pacific Oceans, thus it should retain its ASEAN's centrality to really ensure that the Indo-Pacific will not become an arena for competition between the great powers while ensuring the openness, transparency and inclusivity in the region. Indonesia will not only act as the centre of maritime dynamics but also take responsibility.<sup>81</sup>

### *Creativity*

In this regard, the middle powers have creativity that is associated with intellectual leadership and entrepreneurial leadership. According to Oran R. Young, intellectual leadership refers to how an actor relies on their capabilities when

putting forward political energy and ideas that could shape the behaviour and perspectives of other actors through institutional bargaining.<sup>82</sup> This can be seen in how Indonesia generated the Indo-Pacific concept. The idea itself is not new as we can trace it back to the second term of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's presidency through the Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa. This is because he started to pay more attention to the Indo-Pacific. He further stated that there is a 'trust-deficit' in the Indo-Pacific which challenges the peace and stability of the region. Indonesia has tried to promote relationships based on the common good, specifically the 'Indo-Pacific Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation' in 2013.<sup>83</sup>

As such, on 11 January 2018, Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi made a speech at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and noted that, 'With regard to the future regional architecture, [...]. Indonesia wants ecosystem of peace, stability, prosperity to be established not only in ASEAN, but also in Indo-Pacific. Therefore, together with ASEAN, Indonesia will contribute in advancing a strong positive cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. Instead of a cooperation that is based on suspicion or worse, a perception of threat.'<sup>84</sup> Indonesia will work together with other countries in the region to develop the so-called Indo-Pacific cooperation umbrella that is free, open, inclusive, rule of law-based and most importantly, based on the ASEAN's centrality.

If intellectual leadership is about generating ideas, then entrepreneurial leadership is about how the middle powers make use of their negotiating skill to influence or frame the issues in ways that are integrative while encouraging the actors to accept the deals.<sup>85</sup> During 2018 and 2019, Indonesia actively promoted and lobbied its Indo-Pacific concept with both ASEAN and EAS countries. The concept was introduced by Joko Widodo at the 32<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Summit on 28 April 2018 which was later reiterated in the global dialogue of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) by Retno Marsudi on 16 May 2018. Furthermore, the concept was also formally presented at the 8<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting of the EAS on 9 August 2018. On this occasion, Marsudi stated how Indonesia welcomes an exchange of views on the Indo-Pacific through discussions. She further assured the ministers that the concept was not intended to create any new mechanisms or to replace existing ones, rather, it is for the purpose of enhancing the existing mechanism following the dynamics in the region.<sup>86</sup>

### *Coalition building*

It was further emphasised in Joko Widodo's speech at the 13<sup>th</sup> EAS on 15 November 2018 that Indonesia would discuss the Indo-Pacific concept more openly with EAS countries. He also emphasised integrating the two oceans into a single geostrategic theater, '[...] the importance of increased maritime coopera-

tion, not only in the Pacific Ocean, but also in the Indian Ocean. We need to maintain peaceful and security in the Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean. It is not about struggling for natural resources, regional disputes, and maritime supremacy. Rather, it is about how make the two oceans a center for world routes.<sup>87</sup> The Indo-Pacific concept itself focuses on three areas of cooperation, namely maritime cooperation, infrastructure and connectivity and sustainable development. These areas of cooperation are in line with the GMF's pillars in addition to the seven policy pillars of the Indonesian Ocean Policy: (1) maritime and human resource development, (2) maritime security, law enforcement and safety at sea, (3) ocean governance and institutions, (4) the development of the maritime economy, (5) ocean space management and maritime protection, (6) maritime culture and (7) maritime diplomacy.<sup>88</sup>

However, the concept has not attracted the other ASEAN members as they have shown less enthusiasm, especially Singapore who stated that the concept was lacking in clarity. This is also due to the view of the other ASEAN members that the concept is seen as an initial move to step back from ASEAN and to become more Indonesia-centric. They are concerned with the possibility of making EAS the default mechanism of this concept.<sup>89</sup> After an extensive process, Indonesia then outlined a draft document titled 'Indonesia's perspective for an ASEAN outlook on the Indo-Pacific: towards a peaceful, prosperous, and inclusive region'. Furthermore, to finalise it, Indonesia held a high-level dialogue on Indo-Pacific cooperation in Jakarta on 20 March 2019. It was provided a platform to discuss and exchange views about the opportunities for cooperation.<sup>90</sup> The draft was finally adopted by ASEAN at the 34<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit on 16 June 2019. Sukma specified that 'the Outlook promises that ASEAN will continue to maintain its central role in the evolving regional architecture [...] and continue to be an honest broker within strategic environment of competing interests.'<sup>91</sup>

The intellectual and entrepreneurial leadership above is finally directed to coalition-building. For middle powers, a coalition of like-minded states is essential to realising their objectives. This is because middle powers are not as powerful as superpowers. They will usually build coalitions through multilateral settings. In this regard, Indonesia values multilateralism to achieve its objectives as clearly stated by Joko Widodo in the 9<sup>th</sup> EAS on 13 November 2014: 'For Indonesia, EAS plays important role in promoting security, stability and prosperity in the region. Therefore, I choose this multilateral forum to express our idea of becoming global maritime axis.' As a strong maritime power, Indonesia is committed to keeping the Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean peaceful and safe, thus opposing any kind of contestation.<sup>92</sup>

### *Credibility*

From the first four 'Cs', we come to credibility. Ravenhill explained credibility as how the ideas or initiatives coming from the middle powers are likely to be accepted by all parties.<sup>93</sup> There is an opinion, when compared to superpowers, that middle powers are unlikely to dominate and become the largest beneficiary of the outcome. Instead, they highlight mutual benefits and common good. The Indo-Pacific concept laid down in the AOIP is widely accepted. Tan argued that the US response to China's BRI forces the countries in the region to take side.<sup>94</sup> In addition, the FOIP brought in by the Quad, especially by the US, is often seen as an anti-China coalition. This has hardened due to the tense rivalry between the US and China which makes the FOIP more directed as a counter balance against China. Its exclusive approach could jeopardise ASEAN centrality. In this context, the AOIP offers a different approach in the Indo-Pacific by emphasising ASEAN centrality and inclusivity. The AOIP will engage all powers within the EAS, including China.

There is also the dimension of credibility mentioned by Ravenhill: how consistent the middle powers are in their policies or initiatives, both domestically and internationally.<sup>95</sup> In this context, we can safely argue that Indonesia, as Marsudi said, is striving to become a true partner for peace, security and prosperity.<sup>96</sup> This has been consistently promoted and they take a lead in this matter. In response to the FOIP and the strategic rivalry between the US and China, Indonesia has played an important role in drafting the outlook in the Indo-Pacific. Given that the AOIP is an extension of the GMF vision, Weatherbee and Anwar noted that it will leverage Indonesia in the maritime domain and give credibility to the GMF in response to the FOIP.<sup>97</sup> Sukma noted that there are two imperatives in terms of how Indonesia will ensure the AOIP realisation: (1) that it is important for Indonesia to implement its maritime strategy comprehensively, and (2) that Indonesia must ensure to advance multilateralism through discussions within ASEAN-led mechanisms on a common strategy for the Indo-Pacific.<sup>98</sup> Indonesia along with the other ASEAN members must engage proactively in the midst of strategic rivalry. On top of that, Indonesia looks forward to the AOIP serving as an inclusive platform for all competing regional visions while mitigating any power rivalries.

### **Conclusion**

It can be concluded that Indonesia uses its global maritime fulcrum agenda to respond to power geopolitics like those of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) brought in by China and the Free-Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) brought in by the Quad. The analysis shows that Indonesia engages with the characteristics of being a middle power when responding to the BRI through maximising its own



resources and then implementing niche diplomacy. This also relates to using its strength when conducting diplomacy especially with China within the BRI framework and with Indonesia's interest in the GMF. Indonesia also has the capability to build itself a constructive role as well as being a good multilateralist within ASEAN by connecting the ASEAN interests with the BRI agenda.

Furthermore, Indonesia uses the 5Cs as middle power variables when responding to the FOIP. The first is capacity, focusing on Indonesia's power. The next is concentration, where Indonesia tries to focus on the benefits from the FOIP while connecting it with the GMF. Creativity is where Indonesia actively engages with establishing values for ASEAN in relation to the FOIP. It also connects with coalition-building where Indonesia is trying to develop its relations not only with the FOIP but also with other states, especially during the East Asia Summit. The last is credibility. It can be argued that Indonesia takes a firm stance when upholding neutrality when responding to the BRI and FOIP. Therefore according to both the middle power and character analysis being focused on Indonesia in response to the BRI and FOIP, it can be assumed that Indonesia is trying to focus on its own agenda as well as focusing on its values and capacity when responding to the BRI and FOIP.

Through this paper, we expect Indonesia could act in a certain way in the future. Indonesia uses the GMF as strategy to increase its prestige, role and influence in regional and even international order. Nevertheless, it does not mean that Indonesia will disengage from ASEAN because Indonesia still depends on this organisation. Indonesia also has a prominent role in ASEAN and there is a lot of space for Indonesia to influence the decisions from ASEAN. Besides that, Indonesia did not make the GMF to go against the BRI and FOIP. Indeed, Indonesia desires to build relationships and cooperation with the BRI and FOIP in any sector that suits its interest.



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Research article

# Refugee-Related Political Violence in Asia and Africa

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## Abstract

*This work focuses on the analysis of one of the most discussed phenomenon of recent years, the reception of refugees. The authors of this work examine refugee-related political violence, a phenomenon that has not been explored in the last twenty years. The aim is to describe the occurrence of this phenomenon in cases from Asia and Africa. The individual incidents are categorised into six categories of political violence. The authors describe the type of political violence involving refugees for the last 15 years. They also analyse which type of violence is most common. At the same time, they devote to the analysis and description of frequency, intensity and persistence. They compare their findings with similar work that was published in 1998, and they explain why and what changes have occurred in the field of refugee-related political violence over the last 15 years.*

**Keywords:** Africa, Asia, conflict, refugee, security, violence

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## **Abbreviations**

ECOWAS - Economic Community of West African States

FNL - The National Forces of Liberation (Forces Nationales de Libération)

ICGLR - International Conference of the Great Lakes Region

LRA - Lord's Resistance Army

UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

VNSA - Violent Non-State Actor

GTD - Global Terrorism Database

ISIS - Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

IDPs - Internally displaced persons

UNRWA - United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

## **Introduction: Preview of the refugee-related political violence**

Currently, more than 70.8 million people are forcibly displaced, of these people, one third are refugees.<sup>1</sup> These people flee not only because of war conflicts, ethnic or religious violence but also because of natural disasters such as droughts or floods. More than half of the forcibly displaced population is relocated within the state, but the other half seek refuge in foreign countries, most of them in neighbouring or geographically close countries. The vast majority of refugee-hosting states are not developed and prosperous states. These are developing countries, which host 86% of the world's refugees. Moreover, the increase in refugees is growing rapidly every year. For instance, from 2016 to the end of 2018, the number increased by almost 4 million. The pressure on refugee-hosting states is growing, the number of refugees is increasing and it is necessary to ensure them decent living conditions and take care of their protection and security. However, these states are often unable to provide for the basic needs of their own population. The situation is, therefore, very complicated. Refugees exert economic, environmental, political and security pressure on the host states. This is confirmed by the Fragile State Index, which includes the influx of refugees and the movement of internally displaced persons into its indicators, which largely weaken the state.

Leaving aside the economic and environmental impacts that appear in the vast majority of cases, political-security impacts are something that poses a direct threat to the lives of refugees but also to the local population. The presence of refugees in the state increases the possibility of political violence. This may be due to several factors. It is very often impossible to distinguish refugees from armed warriors and militias. These armed actors abuse refugee camps and refugee status. They hide in the camps and abuse financial aid. The second factor is that refugees are much more vulnerable and in desperate situations. Desperate

living and economic conditions, together with negative personal experiences, increase the possibility of radicalisation and their involvement in the activities of armed militias. However, it is not clear how big the problem of refugee-related political violence is at present. There are very famous cases from the past; for example, the attacks by Palestinian refugees in Lebanon or the involvement of refugees in the structures of the terrorist group Al-Shabaab and their violent activity in Kenyan territory. This includes several cases that are known worldwide. Nevertheless, what does this mean for the global refugee population? In how many cases does refugee-related violence actually occur? There is currently no study to examine this and give a clear answer. In the past, thorough research was conducted by Sarah Kenyon Lischer. She researched refugee-related political violence in Asia and Africa, but the study only works with dates up to 1998. Since that year, no similar research has been conducted. Therefore this study is dealing with the latest cases in the last fifteen years and, like her, it is working with Africa and Asia. This is because the vast majority of the world's refugee population is located on these two continents.

This paper presents latest data in order to analyse the frequency, persistence and type of political violence involving refugees for 2003 to 2018 in Asia and Africa. This also describes to a limited extent the intensity of violence. The analysis reveals trends over the past few years, and the article describes what kind of refugee-related political violence occurs most often, in how many cases the violence actually occurs and how often it occurs. At the same time, it compares the area of Africa and Asia to determine which continent, but also which area within the continent, is most often captured by this phenomenon.

### **Refugee-related political violence in the literature**

A vast majority of the authors describe the impact of receiving refugees on the host community. Most of these studies are case studies or studies involving only a few cases. An example is the work of Grindheim, who, based on a questionnaire survey, examined the impact of refugees on the host state in Kenya.<sup>2</sup>

Another example is the work done by Gomez et al., who divided the negative impacts into four categories: economic, political-security, environmental and social.<sup>3</sup> The critical point is that the vast majority of authors who study this issue describe the outbreak of violence and the deterioration of security. However, analysing what kind of violence occurs is no longer part of their studies.

Several quantitative studies focusing on refugee related political violence have been conducted in the past. However, more qualitative case studies have been published. An example of a quantitative study is a survey conducted by Gineste and Savun in 2019. Their research describes that larger refugee populations are associated with higher levels of violence in host states. They de-

scribe several categories of violence associated with refugees. The key is whether violence is directed against refugees or refugees commit violence.<sup>4</sup> These authors conduct a simple statistical analysis to determine which type of violence is most common and where violence occurs most often. However, this survey is problematic for several reasons. The authors mainly worked with data from The US State Department of Human Rights Country reports. The information in these reports does not sufficiently cover events in remote African and Asian states. The main problem is its categorical distribution. There are a number of cases where it cannot be said unilaterally that violence is merely directed against refugees or vice versa. Cases of refugee-related political violence are very complex and complicated social events, and this division is very subjective for a large number of cases and does not cover what often happens in reality. Another example of a quantitative study is the work done by Kreibaum.<sup>5</sup> However, his work does not focus primarily on refugees but on various causes of political violence in Africa. Some cases involve refugee related political violence, but others do not. A quantitative study on refugee violence in East Africa was conducted by Mbiyozo.<sup>6</sup> His research is based on interviewing refugees to see if they are experiencing violence and why. The research itself seeks to reveal the reasons for the radicalisation of refugees.

Several authors focus on the description of refugee-related political violence in a particular region. These qualitative studies include the work of Bariagaber, who focuses on the Horn of Africa region.<sup>7</sup> Pini also addressed this issue, trying to affect more African states, but especially those with a large refugee population.<sup>8</sup> Several studies have also been conducted in Asia. Murshid addresses the issue of refugees in South Asia. He describes several aspects, such as national politics and the conditions of refugees, as well as incidents of violence.<sup>9</sup> The work focuses mainly on India and Pakistan. Violence against Rohingya refugees is described in his study Momen.<sup>10</sup> This study focuses on violence in Bangladesh. An extensive study describing several case studies was performed by Loescher et al.<sup>11</sup> This team of authors describes the situation of Somali, Palestinian, Sudanese or Burmese refugees.

Violence in relation to refugees is also described by other authors. For example, in 2006, Salehyan and Gleditsch created a concept according to which refugees are generating civil war in host countries. This occurs with the assistance of four mechanisms. The first mechanism is the proliferation of weapons and the cross-border movement of insurgents. The second mechanism is when refugees provide mobilisation resources for domestic opposition. The third mechanism is when the refugee population changes the country's ethnic balance. The last mechanism is a competition between locals and refugees for employment and natural resources that causes violence.<sup>12</sup>

Lischer conducted a thorough survey of refugee-related political violence in the 1990s. For the purposes of our research, we decided to use her theoretical concept because her approach is the most accurate and thoughtful. This concept is clear, and the division and classification of cases into categories cannot be called into question, as it is in a case of study that was conducted by Gineste and Savun. The categories are clearly and logically delimited. She has created a total of five categories of refugee-related political violence: Attacks between sending state and refugees, Attacks between receiving state and refugees, Ethnic or factual violence among refugees, Internal violence within receiving state, and Interstate war or unilateral intervention.<sup>13</sup> We understand these categories in the same way as Lischer. Based on an analysis of several cases, we decided to create a sixth category. There are new cases of violence that cannot be classified in any of her categories. This is the categorisation we work with:

- a. Attacks between sending state and refugees**  
(The violence occurs between refugees and government of sending state)
- b. Attacks between receiving state and refugees**  
(The violence occurs between refugees and government of receiving state)
- c. Ethnic or factual violence among refugees**  
(The violence occurs between groups of refugees)
- d. Internal violence within receiving state**  
(The violence occurs between refugees and local population of receiving state)
- e. Interstate war or unilateral intervention**  
(Refugees and the government of more than one state are involved in violence)
- f. Attacks between refugees and transnational VNSA**  
(The violence occurs between refugees and transnational VNSA (non-state armed groups operating across several countries, it includes terrorist groups, warlords, militias and insurgency. These actors differ in their goals, organisational structure, or approaches to resources. What they have in common is that they do not represent or are not supported by the state. In this case, their activity extends beyond the borders of one state, and they carry out violent armed activities.))<sup>14</sup>

This study builds on her work since she worked with old data only until 1996. Therefore our goal is to assess whether there has been any change in recent years, what the new trends are and to describe and explain in which part of the world refugee-related political violence occurs most often, and also determine which category is the most prevalent.

## **Procedures and methods**

The aim of this work is to describe the development of refugee-related political violence in the last 15 years. We work with the period from 2003 to 2018. This includes the area of Asia and Africa because the vast majority of events took place in this area. We describe trends in refugee-related political violence and focus on frequency, persistence and, to a limited extent, the intensity of violence. The frequency expresses how many incidents of refugee related political violence took place in a given state during the period under study. The intensity determines the number of victims who died during these incidents. In the vast majority of cases, it is in the order of units. Persistence focuses on whether a particular type of incident persists in a given state. In some cases, one type of incident occurs several times over the years. In these cases, the persistence rate is high. Then we compare all cases through structural comparisons and, based on these comparisons, we create extended typologies/categories. These created categories are mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive, cover all possibilities and do not overlap.

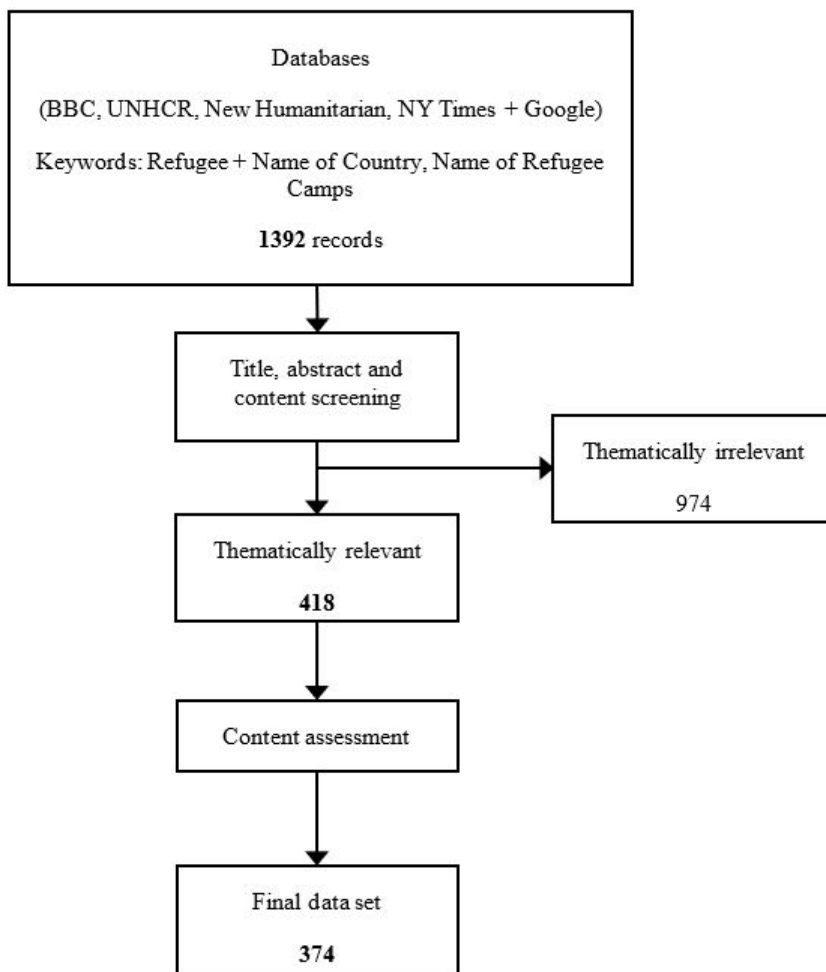
We work with all cases (states) that have a refugee community larger than 2000. This is mainly because data on smaller communities is not available. Moreover, the low number of refugees (less than 2000) in the vast majority does not affect the events in the host state. We proceed chronologically, monitoring each year within each of these states and recording and categorising cases of violence. Consequently, persistence and frequency can be determined. The intensity, in this case, is of secondary importance. We describe it mainly in cases that somehow exceed the average by their scope, while we try to explain these cases. The typology/categorisation itself was described in the previous chapter. This includes a total of six types of refugee-related political violence.

The limits of this work are mainly related to the lack of sources. Small events (according to the number of involved people and the intensity of violence) are often not recorded and reported. We reduce these limits by using several kinds of sources. This includes UNHCR's monthly and annual reports, as well as data available from the Fragile State Index (Fund For Peace), which measures the growth of refugees in the host state, as well as the development of violence. Another important source is the reports from the New Humanitarian (IRIN), which deal with refugee issues in detail. We supplement all these sources with news from the media, especially the BBC and New York Times.

## **Trends in refugee-related violence in Africa**

Refugee-related political violence is a phenomenon that is not currently in decline. The data presented here add new dimensions to the discourse about refugees and security. Few studies have so far dealt with this phenomenon. This

Figure 1. Flow diagram of data acquisition



research is based on a study conducted by Lischer (2001) but introduces a new category. Thus, the categories are expanded to reflect reality. The data shows that this expansion is necessary because this new category, where violent non-state actors perpetrate violence, is widespread. Two-fifths of all cases of refugee-related political violence in Africa fall into the category of Attacks between refugees and transnational VNSA. This is groundbreaking compared to the study of Lischer, and it illustrates a rapid development of the phenomenon. In her study, the most frequent type of violence involved the state. Either sending state or receiving state. However, these new data from 2003-2018 show something else. The most frequent type of violence is violence involving VNSA. On the contrary, violence involving states is not very common as it was in the 1990s. Especially cases

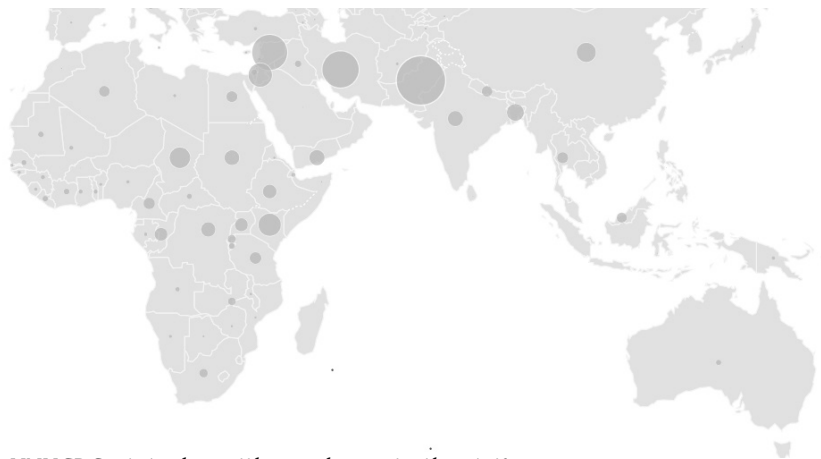
where sending states or governments of several states are involved in violence are sporadic. This can be influenced by a number of factors. Since the 1990s, there has been a rapid decline in interstate wars.<sup>15</sup> These wars are rather exceptional, even in Africa. The vast majority of conflicts are domestic civil wars, which involve government forces and VNSA. The internationalisation of conflict is not very common. Another factor may be that there is an increase in participation in regional organisations such as the African Union, ECOWAS or ICGLR.<sup>16</sup> This increases regional interdependence, belonging and cooperation while increasing security and reducing the risk of an outbreak of interstate war. States already have clear borders for the vast majority of cases, and no new states are created. The shrinkage of the border and territorial disputes is therefore apparent. Other factors may also have an impact, but its description is not relevant for this work.

Our research also generated further findings. The vast majority of African states have a community of refugees in their territory of over 2000. Almost all countries have a higher incidence of refugees. In particular, this concerns 40 African states. Figure no. 2 shows the average number of refugees over the years in individual countries. The size of the red dot indicates the size of the refugee community. The countries with the largest refugee communities are Cameroon, Chad, DRC, Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. On the other hand, Tunisia, Morocco and Somalia have communities fewer than 2000 refugees.

The size of the refugee community affects the occurrence of violent incidents in the national territory. This is not a purely linear relationship. However, our research shows that if the refugee population in a country is extensive, with more than 100,000 individuals, the chances of violence are higher. Specifically, this chance is almost four times higher than in states that have a small refugee community. These figures apply to the area of Africa. There are several examples. Djibouti, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau or Malawi have a very small refugee community, and no refugee-related political violence has occurred in these states. On the other hand, there are cases that violate these rules. For example, Egypt has a high refugee population, and no refugee-related political violence has been reported. Conversely, Benin and Ghana have a small community of refugees, and violence has occurred. It should be noted that the frequency, persistence and intensity were much lower than in cases with high refugee communities such as Uganda, DRC or Cameroon.

The vast majority of African refugee camps have poor security conditions. Many of the camps are overcrowded, and the capacity is several times exceeded. Examples are refugee camps Dadaab and Kakuma in Kenya or Yida camp in South Sudan.<sup>17</sup> Poor security conditions persist in 2/3 of all refugee camps in Africa. This includes, for example, violent assaults, rapes or stealing. This daily crime and these acts of violence are often not recorded or recorded just occasionally. Therefore it is not possible to work with all these kinds of cases. Some

Figure 2. The size of the refugee community



Source: UNHCR Statistics, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/dataviz/6>

of these cases would be categorised as Ethnic or factual violence among refugees. Some of these violent events cannot be categorised as political violence. Data on all these cases is not available. This means that these attacks are most common in practice, but records are missing. These are cases of violence between individuals, which are often not reported. That is why we cannot work with it, and we work only with greater violence.

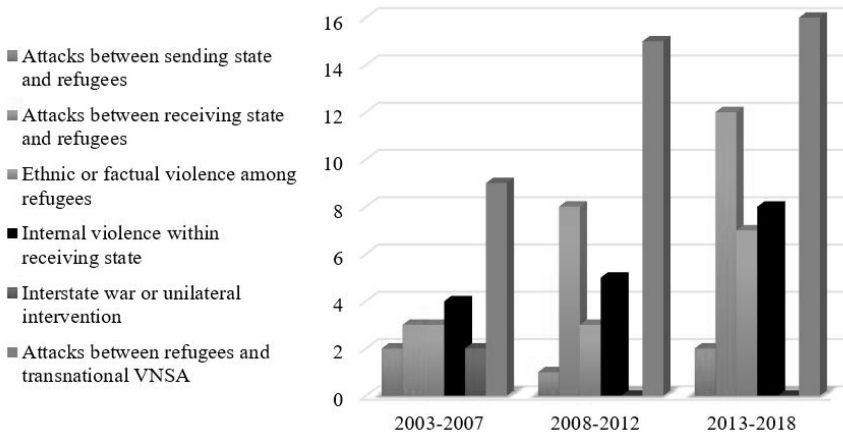
The highest frequency and persistence of violence is mainly in the states of the Great Lakes region and East Africa. To be more specific, the highest persistence of violence is in DRC, Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya and South Sudan. In Kenya and Uganda, this represents VNSA attacks, but in Ethiopia, it is Internal violence within the receiving state, and in Kenya, it is Ethnic or factual violence among refugees. The case of South Sudan is specific because it involves two types of violence, among refugees and among refugees and the local community. Conversely, minor violence has been reported in the region of South Africa. No case has been reported in Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe or Botswana. Only one case has been reported in Zambia and one in South Africa. In the following two graphs, individual types of violence are recorded over three time periods of five years. The second graph shows the countries with the highest levels of violence, ranked by frequency. Countries where no incidence of refugee-related political violence was reported were not used in the graph.

### Trends within each category

The first category (Attacks between sending state and refugees) includes only five incidents of violence. This is interesting as there has generally been a decline in violence involving state actors compared to Lischer's study. There was

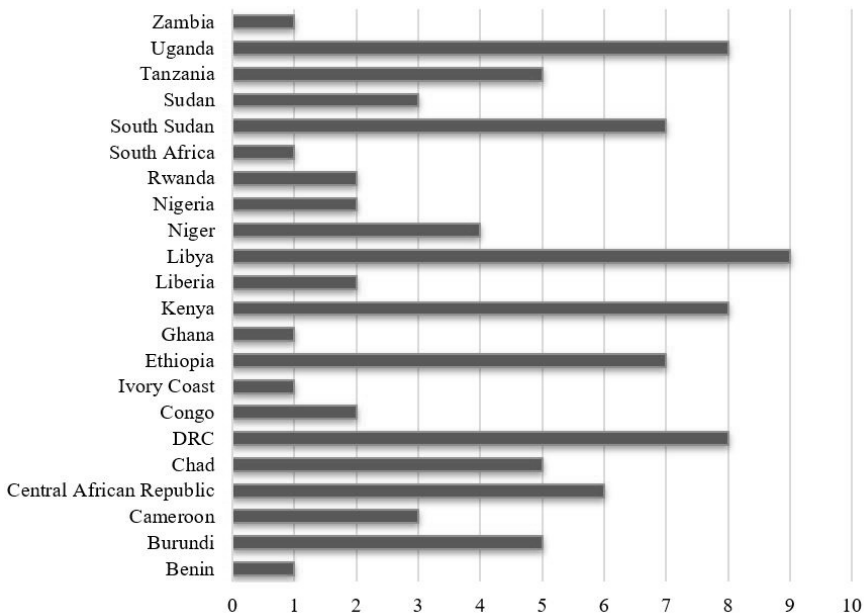


Figure 3. Type of refugee-related political violence in Africa (2003-2018)



Source: authors' own graph, data from BBC, UNHCR, New Humanitarian, NY Times

Figure 4. Frequency of refugee-related political violence by state (2003-2018)



Source: authors' own graph, data from BBC, UNHCR, New Humanitarian, NY Times

also a rapid decline in the second category (Attacks between receiving state and refugees), but this includes more cases, a total of 23. The decline in the first category was mainly due to the decline in interstate wars. National governments are reluctant to engage in conflicts and violence outside their territory (see pre-

vious chapter). On the other hand, refugees are often perceived as a threat. Refugee camps very often serve as a base for attack planning and recruitment of members for VNSA. An example is LRA activity in DRC or the Central African Republic. The group forcibly recruited members and attacked refugee camps across several countries. The situation is similar in refugee camps in Kenya and Ethiopia, where the terrorist group Al-Shabaab operates. However, unlike the LRA, recruitment of Al-Shabaab members is primarily voluntary, influenced primarily by the prospect of financial gains. Therefore, receiving states are willing to take advantage of physical violence against refugees. Most of these 'B' cases involve violent clashes between refugees and the police or military of the receiving state, who try to control and reduce the number of refugees, often at the cost of violating human rights and international conventions. 'A' cases of violence are more interesting, as the armed forces of one state extend outside their territory. This strategy is often used by the Sudanese army, which bombs refugee camps in South Sudan, or by the governments of Burundi and Rwanda, who try to get rid of political dissent in refugee camps.<sup>18</sup> This type of violence tends to be the most intense and, in practice, has claimed the most significant number of victims.

Ethnic or factual violence among refugees is present in most refugee camps in Africa. However, records of this violence are often missing. Thirteen cases have been reported in total, but we believe that, in fact, this category is the most prevalent. Unfortunately, this kind of violence is often overlooked, and the world media does not pay as much attention to it as in the cases of state involvement or VNSA. Examples when large-scale violence occurs (several people have died or it involves hundreds to thousands of individuals) are mostly recorded. Examples are disputes in Mtabila and Myovosi refugee camps (Tanzania) among Hutu and Tutsi refugees during the year 2003.<sup>19</sup> Other examples are recent events (2018) from Ethiopia, where different ethnic groups were fighting each other in the Dollo Ado camp. It can be said about this category that violence is most persistent because different ethnic groups are forced to stay together in the camp for a long time. They often have different cultures, religions and customs. In addition, groups that compete in the home country often compete with each other in refugee camps as well.

Internal violence within the receiving state most often involves disputes between refugees and the local farmers over land and cattle. These cases are very frequent in East Africa, where livelihood is challenging because there are deforestation and frequent droughts. A total of 17 incidents were reported in this category. Interstate war or unilateral intervention, on the other hand, are very exceptional. We reported only two cases. Both are related to the second civil war in the DRC when the governments of Burundi and Rwanda sent troops to this territory and, like many other African states, joined the conflict.

The most frequent type of refugee-related political violence is the last category – Attacks between refugees and transnational VNSA. Interestingly, the persistence and intensity of this type of violence vary significantly from case to case. We noticed a total of 40 cases of attacks between refugees and transnational VNSA. In some of these cases, violence was very intense. An example is the LRA's attacks on DRC refugee camps. In the overwhelming majority of these cases, the attacks were ruthless and the violence intense, resulting in several dozen victims. The bloodiest attack ever is the FNL attack in Burundi. The Burundi Hutu rebel faction attacked refugees near the Congolese border, saying that its fighters were pursuing Burundian soldiers who fled to the camp from a nearby military position. The camp sheltered ethnic Tutsi refugees from Congo known as the Banyamulenge who fled the violence in North Kivu. More than 180 refugees died during this attack.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, VNSA attacks in Kenya or Niger were less intense.

### **Trends in refugee-related violence in Asia**

Between 2003 and 2018, thirty-four Asian countries hosted more than 2000 refugees. However, the number of refugees was not constant, and many of these countries did not have a substantial refugee community during most of those years. For example, Russia was mainly unaffected by refugees, until 2014 when the Ukraine Crisis started. Of all the states with a substantial refugee community, only ten states had reported the presence of refugee-related political violence, and only three countries experienced refugee-related political violence in five years or more.

Eighteen Asian countries hosted more than 2000 refugees in 2018. The largest refugee communities could be found in the Middle East due to the Palestinian refugees residing there. The most extensive number of refugees resided in Jordan, which hosted over two million Palestinians registered with UNWRA and an additional 700,000 non-Palestinian refugees registered with UNHCR. Political violence affected only those countries that had a population of over 100,000.

Relatively small refugee communities in Central or East Asia were not linked to refugee violence. However, even large refugee populations in some countries were not affected by political violence, despite hosting over 100,000. This includes states in South East Asia but also Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. This indicates that the size of the refugee population had some impact, but other factors were involved, too. The absence of violence in some countries in Asia could be seen as surprising due to the bad condition in many refugee camps. For example, the dire conditions for refugees from Myanmar in the Umpiem Mai camp in Thailand in 2012, for example, led to a fire that destroyed almost half of the camp.<sup>21</sup>

The above mentioned indicates that the size of the refugee community is not sufficient or the only factor that influences the probability of violence. In fact, we observed violence mostly in countries that are hosting refugees that are in a protracted situation. This type of refugee community can become what Lisher calls a state-in-exile, a coherent militant community exploited by violent actors for its operations.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, even some countries that hosted many refugees in the protracted situation did not experience refugee-related violence frequently. For example, Jordan had a community of Palestinian refugees of more than two million but was exposed to just one case of violence in 2016. We found that refugee-related political violence was absent in South-East and East Asia, which was not always the case before 2003. Large populations of Rohingya refugees that fled from Myanmar did not lead to violence in Thailand or China.

The attacks between receiving state and refugees (category B) was the most observed type (15 times). This can be primarily attributed to the terrorist groups operating in the Middle East (Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq) and using the refugee camps as safe havens to conduct terrorist attacks in the host countries and consequently the security forces of the host states intervening in the refugee camps. However, this type of violence can also be observed in Pakistan, Yemen, Bangladesh and, to a lesser degree, in India. Contrary, interstate war or unilateral intervention was observed only once when in 2017, a Saudi military helicopter mistook a boat with Somali refugees in Yemen territorial waters for Houthi rebels and killed 42 people.<sup>23</sup>

The highest frequency and persistence of violence were both reported in – Israel/Palestine. High frequency and persistence were also observed in Syria and Lebanon. All three countries hosted Palestinian refugees, and most of the reported violence was related to the Palestinian community. The most frequent violence was related to fighting between Israel Defense Forces and militant elements within Palestine, mainly in the Gaza Strip.

The rise in intensity of violence can be seen after 2011. In Syria, we did not see any violence before 2011. This finding highlights that the Syrian civil war was a pivotal moment. The rise in violence can be partially attributed to jihadist groups that operated within the refugee camps in Syria. On the other hand, Jordan had just one case of refugee-related violence in 2016, despite the sizeable Palestinian community that resided there. Jordan can also be considered as one of the most stable countries in the region. This indicates that the overall stability of a receiving country can lower the probability of violence related to refugees despite hosting a large refugee community.

VNSAs activity in refugee camps in Asia was not only limited to attacks on refugees. Refugee camps in Syria and Jordan were targeted by ISIS for recruiting new members. Hamas and its affiliates were using refugee facilities in the

Gaza Strip and West Bank as safe havens and bases for its operations. The Taliban was also recruiting new members within the Afghani refugee community in Pakistan. According to the Global Terrorism Database, there were 62 attacks committed by the Taliban from 2005 to 2017 in Pakistan.<sup>24</sup> Pakistani authorities blame refugees for most of these attacks.<sup>25</sup> The intensity of violence was high also in Pakistan, where large security operations within the refugee camps had been conducted. The protracted situation of Afghan refugees combined with the fact that the Taliban was operating among refugees complicated the relationship between the Pakistan state and Afghan refugees.<sup>26</sup> On other occasions, the dire conditions and forced closure of the Jalozi refugee camp led to the use of violence by Pakistan security forces in 2008.<sup>27</sup>

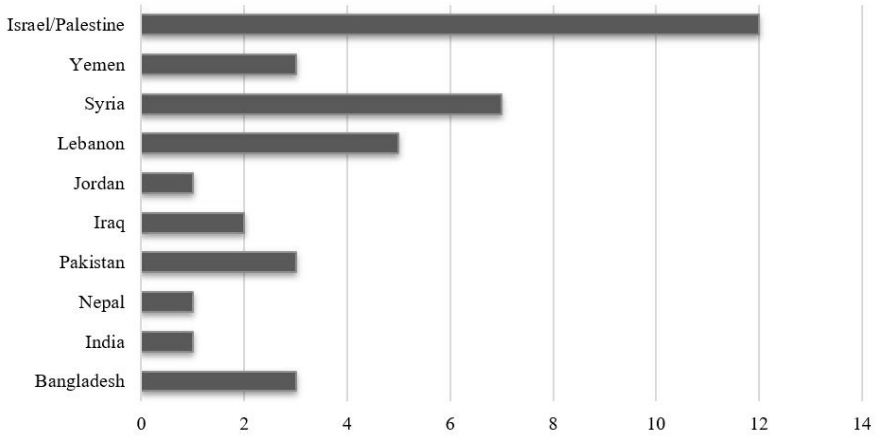
### **Trends within each category**

The only case where type A violence occurred is Israel, where attacks between Israeli security forces and Palestinian refugees (primarily located in the Gaza Strip) were reported almost every year. This type, although rare, is also persistent and intensive, but that can be attributed to a unique situation in Israel and Palestine. Many cases of this violence can be categorised as refugee-related. More than 70% of the population in Gaza are refugees. Militants have been using refugee facilities as bases for many of their operations. Israel sometimes specifically targeted particular areas used by militants in Gaza's refugee camps.<sup>28</sup>

Type B (attacks between receiving state and refugees) was the most frequent type of violence observed in Asia. We counted fifteen instances when this type of violence occurred. This type of violence typically occurred in Pakistan, Syria and Lebanon. Violence between the government of the receiving state and refugees is strongly linked to the protracted situation on the refugees, and the probability of this type of violence can rise over time. This type of violence was the most intense due to the destructiveness and scale of many cases of this violence in Syria and Lebanon. Type B violence was also the second most persistent type of violence, only topped by the persistent conflict between Israel and Palestine (type A). The protracted situation of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh did lead to this type of violence in the past but did not manifest as strongly during our timeframe. There were reports of this type of violence occurring in 2009 and 2010 during clashes between police and Rohingya.

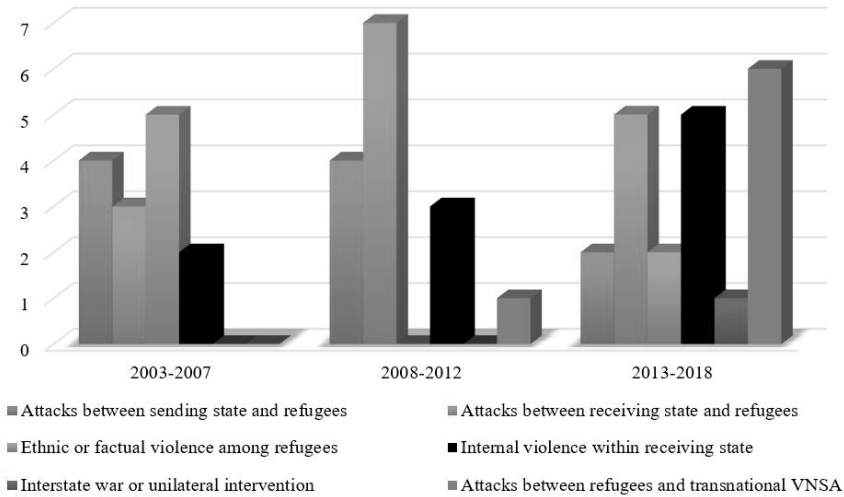
Factional violence (type C) was reported only in Palestinian refugee camps in Syria, Lebanon and Palestine, where militant groups fought over control of refugee camps. We counted seven instances in total. It includes Fatah, Fatah al-Intifada and Fatah al-Islam in Lebanon and the Islamic State and al-Qaeda and Palestinian militias such as the Sons of Yarmouk Movement in Syria. Support of these militants within the refugee community was usually weak, but the

Figure 5. Frequency of refugee-related political violence in Asia by state (2003-2018)



Source: authors' own graph, data from BBC, UNHCR, New Humanitarian, NY Times

Figure 6. Type of refugee-related political violence in Asia (2003-2018)



Source: authors' own graph, data from BBC, UNHCR, New Humanitarian, NY Times

peaceful elements in the refugee community, even if in the majority, lacked the power to properly defend against the influence of violent groups. For example, Fatah al-Islam gained its influence in Nahr al-Bared due to the sympathy among Salafi imams but was not popular among the majority of refugees accommodated in the camp.<sup>29</sup> Type D (internal violence within receiving state) was mainly concentrated also in the Middle Eastern countries. Namely Syria, Israel but also Lebanon, where there was a wave of violent attacks against refugees perpetrated by locals in 2011.<sup>30</sup>

An interstate or unilateral intervention (type E) related to violence towards refugees was observed only in 2017 when Saudi Arabian forces attacked the boat of Somali refugees fleeing Yemen, probably mistaking them for Yemeni rebels.<sup>31</sup> The F type attributes to the highest growth in incidences over time. Here, for eight years, this type of violence was observed in Asia. This development can be attributed almost exclusively to al-Qaeda (or its affiliates) and ISIS operating within the refugee community in Syria. These Jihadist groups were using refugee camps as hideouts and bases. However, at the same time, fighting over control with anti-jihadist militant groups formed by Palestinian refugees, namely The Sons of Yarmouk Movement. Nonetheless, refugee camps were not the primary target of VNSA violence in Asia, and we can conclude that VNSAs targeted mostly local civilian or government targets and not specifically refugees. The fact that refugee camps were used as hideouts for VNSAs makes them more likely to become a terrorist safe haven than the target of a terrorist attack. It has to be noted that the militarisation of refugee camps is nothing new nor limited to the Middle East. For example, Murshid reports tendencies of usually peaceful Rohingya to militarise refugee camps in Bangladesh partially as an answer to mistreatment by Bangladeshi authorities which can in effect create tensions inside the community or towards the receiving state.<sup>32</sup> This phenomenon did not, however, display itself during the selected timeframe.

### **Comparison of Africa and Asia**

At the end of 2018, Africa was hosting more than six million refugees, while Asia, including Turkey, hosted almost ten million plus another five million Palestinians. We found that from 2003 to 2018, violence was twice more frequent in Africa than in Asia. We counted 100 cases in Africa and only 50 in Asia. Even though there are more refugees in Asia, we observe that countries were less affected by violence in Asia. In Africa, the refugee population was more evenly spread out. In Asia, large refugee communities were located in fewer countries. This explains the difference in violence frequency. In Asia, we observed more protracted conflicts. Namely in Iraq, Afghanistan and Israel/Palestine. Although in Africa, the number of protracted conflicts was lower (just Somalia and Sudan), the overall situation on the continent was more unstable, and the instability affected more countries than in Asia. Therefore, despite the overall lower intensity of conflicts in Africa, the frequency of refugee-related violence was higher compared to Asia.

The most frequent type of violence in Africa was type F – violence between refugees and transnational VNSA. We observed 40 cases over the examined period. This was caused mainly by the weakness of national states that were unable to secure their borders and did not have proper control over their territory. In Asia, the most frequent type was the violence between refugees and the gov-

ernment of receiving state, which was reported 15 times. This can be explained by the lack of willingness to bear the responsibility and provide protection to refugees that led to crackdowns on refugees and also real risks posed by the fact that, in some countries, VNSAs, especially jihadist groups, operated within the refugee community.

In some countries in Africa, e.g., the DRC or Angola, the problem of VNSA violence was worsened by the fact that both refugee camps and natural resources were located on the periphery, where VNSAs usually operate. Violent groups then used the opportunity to attack, recruit or enslave refugees. In Africa, ethnicity was an often essential part of these conflicts. VNSAs were attacking refugees also on ethnic grounds. In Asia, this type of violence was less frequent. Only seven cases were reported. However, an increase in this type of violence in recent years can be discovered. In Asia, these cases were linked to jihadist groups, mainly in relation to the Syrian civil war. These attacks were usually caused by fights over control in refugee camps, and refugees were primarily not targeted by insurgents. Nevertheless, in some instances, camps became hideouts or bases for terrorist groups and their recruitment on both continents.

In Africa, some groups such as LRA and FNL specifically targeted refugee camps and committed terrorist attacks, while in Asia, this was much less frequent. This difference can be explained by the different characteristics of some non-state actors operating on both continents. The nationalist ideology and ethnic exclusiveness of FNL meant that it was more likely to continue to persecute refugees abroad, unlike ISIS or Al-Shabaab, which were ideologically and religiously motivated without being ethnically exclusive. These groups can profit by infiltrating the refugee community, spreading propaganda and recruiting new members rather than attacking the refugees.

On both continents, we can observe that the size of the refugee community has an effect on the probability of refugee-related violence. Although primarily in Asia, it seems that the link is not as clear, with some countries, e.g., Turkey or China, not being affected by refugee-related violence, despite having large refugee populations. Instead, the combination of protracted situations of large refugee communities in relatively weak or unstable states seems to be strongly linked to refugee-related violence in Asia. In Asia, countries tend to have better control over their territory compared to Africa, where weakness seems to be more widespread. According to Böhmelt et al. (2018), the risk of refugee conflict depends partially on the capacity of the state to manage security on its territory, which can explain different observations regarding the link between the number of refugee populations and the risk of violence in Asia and Africa.<sup>33</sup> For example, developed authoritarian countries such as China have the capacity



to manage the refugee population, while in countries like Turkey and Egypt, the refugees can integrate more easily due to better economic opportunities and cultural closeness to the receiving state. That can also mediate the risk of conflict.

Nevertheless, on both continents, the intensity of violence was concentrated in specific regions and was less prominent in other areas. African Great Lakes region and East Africa were the most affected in Africa. In Asia, specifically, Syria, Lebanon and Israel/Palestine had the highest frequency and intensity of violence, with significantly Palestine refugees affected. The fact that most of the violence was limited to just a small number of states, especially in Asia, is consistent with Lischer's finding that refugee-related violence is usually connected to specific states.<sup>34</sup> In Africa, the violence was spread to more countries and more communities because of a higher number of weak or failing states that did not correctly control their territory and lack the capacity to manage risks related to the influx of refugees.

In both Africa and Asia, the violence between sending state and refugees was rare. Unlike in Africa, the violence involving the state of origin was not reported in Asia, with the exception of Israel/Palestine, where the situation is quite specific. In Asia, the refugee community usually did not pose a challenge to the country of origin. Therefore, the sending state lacked the motivation to intervene outside of its own territory. In the case of Afghanistan, we could argue that the Afghan refugees in Pakistan constituted a challenge for the government in Kabul because it harbored Taliban militants. In Africa, the number of state cross-border violence remained low. Also, that further indicates that this type of violence is no longer prominent compared to Lischer's study.

We observed the trend of less intrastate conflict and higher involvement by VNSAs on both continents. This can be partially explained by the fact that most of the countries have more clearly defined territory and neighboring states are thus less motivated to intervene outside of their borders. The continuing weakness of many states, political and social instability, porous and long borders, and natural resources located on the periphery combined with ethnic diversity and deteriorating environmental conditions lead to the rise of VNSAs. In Asia, this was manifested by the rise of the insurgency in the Middle East. This trend is likely to continue because of the ongoing instability within the countries currently affected by this type of violence. Compared to Lischer's study, interstate war or unilateral intervention were almost non-existent in Africa and Asia. This finding is consistent with a broader trend of decrease in intrastate conflicts, and it further highlights the shift from state-led violence towards non-state actors becoming one of the defining forces in today's conflicts.

## **Conclusion**

This study explores the topic of refugee-related political violence in Asia and Africa in a fifteen-year period from 2003 to 2018. Based on the available data, it is concluded that the phenomenon of refugee-related political violence underwent rapid changes during this period. The number of refugees increased significantly, and armed conflicts, as well as refugee-related violence, considerably changed its character. Because of these changes, Lischer's framework had to be revised by including the role of VNSAs into the research structure in order to analyse the new environment properly. These changes were not reflected by any other studies. Therefore we had to introduce a new type of political violence – attacks between refugees and transnational VNSAs.

We observed that in Africa, violence was twice as frequent compared to Asia. While Africa had fewer refugees, large refugee populations were spread to more countries. African countries are weaker and usually do not have the capacity to manage the influx of refugees properly. In Asia, the number of countries that hosted large populations of refugees was lower and fewer countries were affected by violence. The overall instability and weakness of states in Africa have become a factor in the rise of violence related to VNSAs. The most frequent type of violence in Africa was the violence between VNSA and refugees, while in Asia, the most cases of violence occurred between the receiving state and refugees. In Asia, VNSAs were not involved in violence against refugees as often, but this type of violence becomes more frequent over time. The violence between the receiving state and refugees was the most frequent type in Asian countries. It usually occurred when the receiving state saw refugees as a threat or was unwilling to bear the responsibility for the refugee community residing in its territory.

The occurrence of refugee-related political violence was usually linked to the size of the refugee population, the time and protracted situation of this population and the capacity of the receiving state to manage the influx of refugees. We found that in Africa, the probability of refugee-related violence was four times higher when the refugee population was above 100,000 individuals. In Asia, the only countries that experienced violence were those with a large population of refugees, but some countries were able to avoid violence despite large numbers of refugees due to a higher capacity to manage the risks related to the refugee community.

The fact that the instability in Asia and Africa is likely to continue in the following years makes it improbable that the rate of refugee-related political violence will decline any time soon. Some of the most destructive acts of violence against refugees were committed by the receiving state, which is alarming, and this illustrates that the refugee population itself is more likely to be a victim of

violence in the receiving state than a source of instability. On the other hand, the states affected by an influx of refugees have to be willing to invest in capacities to manage flows of forced migration and prevent possible violence caused directly or indirectly by refugees. Special care should be taken to prevent the creation of isolated communities stuck in a protracted situation with no perspective to change. These, in addition to the size of the refugee population, are the most influential factors determining the probability of refugee-related violence.



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GOODNOW, Trisha; KIMBLE, James J (eds.). *The Ten Cent War - Comic Books, Propaganda and World War II*. University Press of Mississippi, 2017. ISBN 978-1496810304.

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## **Trisha Goodnow, James J. Kimble (eds.): The Ten Cent War - Comic Books, Propaganda and World War II**

*Reviewed by Ing. Tomáš Kratina*

*The Ten Cent War - Comic Books, Propaganda and World War II* (2016) by American authors and professors of Oregon State University and Seton Hall University Trisha Goodnow, James J. Kimble and co-authors. essentially deals with theses on the influence of American war propaganda from World War II (1939 - 1945) dosed through popular comics to the American population. By propaganda, the central theme of the book, we mean the purposeful dissemination of opinions, often rhetorically amplified to the extreme, whose goal is to persuade or directly change the opinions or critical considerations of groups of the population or the entire nation. The more the mass propaganda (for example, thanks to the media), the more aggressive and frequented, the more its persuasive effect grows, as the inhabitants themselves begin to believe it and themselves spread the ideas of propaganda among others. The issue of war propaganda is not a phenomenon of modern times at all, as the authors themselves state in their introduction, the germs have been known since ancient times. Over time, it has developed and become more efficient thanks to radio, magazines, television and today, thanks to the almost unlimited influence of the Internet and social networks. Throughout history, humanity has experienced that propaganda is often associated with ideologies and world-

views that have the potential to influence the masses. Although propaganda is most often associated with the Nazi regime and the personalities of A. Hitler and J. Goebbels, very capable speakers in this area, as the peer-reviewed publication shows, the United States was not far behind in propaganda. After all, the image used on the cover of the book sufficiently expresses the power and message of propaganda and in which direction it is targeted. The used image from the comic depicts Uncle Sam in the background breaking a swastika (a symbol of Nazi Germany) and in the foreground the grotesquely fleeing Hitler and Mussolini in front of an angry (probably) American young man.

The book is thematically divided into 12 chapters, with a different author participating in each of them, which is one of the reasons why the book, or its components, is very diverse in terms of opinion and content. Each of the authors contributed to the topic of comic war literature with their own original insight. The chapters have the character of a written professional publication, structured into an introduction, starting points, conclusions, notes and cited literature. Declaratory statements are provided with reference to the consulted literature. Even for these reasons, the book can be considered a seriously prepared publication, which can serve as a quality basis for other subsequent professional publications.

To evaluate the reviewed book, and thus the topics and comics dealt with in the publication, we must approach it with at least basic prior knowledge of history and historical context. In particular, after the outbreak of World War II in Europe, the United States remained militarily out of the conflict (we do not consider the act of supplying Great Britain with military equipment and weapons as direct military intervention). The American public was strongly opposed to the US entering the war - it was not her war and was taking place on a distant continent in Europe. America changed its mind after the events at Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, and then war propaganda, armaments and other military activities began at full speed. In the introduction to the book, the authors note that various forms of propaganda, including pictorial comics, were a way to unite the nation and accentuate patriotic thinking on the way to war.

It would be illusory to consider contemporary American superheroes such as Captain America, Wonder Woman, Superman, Batman, The Sentinels and others who successfully flood world cinemas with fabulous profits, and who are known throughout much of the world to be the work of Hollywood today. In fact these superheroes appeared in comic books as early as World War II, as the book describes. The authors of the book correctly identified and named the power of propaganda transformed into a *fight* between comic book heroes and designated enemies, Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. This influence had

an articularly strong effect on children and young people, because they wanted to identify with their hero and be like him. Whether a comic book hero fights the evil Nazis, the evil Japanese, the communists, the imperialists, the capitalists, the terrorists, the mad scientists or others is a mere variable that reflects the current national situation and foreign policy of the country.

Co-authors Katsion, Judy, Palmer, Wild and, marginally, others, notice the pernicious influence of (war) propaganda applied through comics to children and young people. Regarding the ideological impact of the comics, for which the authors cited child psychologists, who states that 'this kind of propaganda is more effective than any other kind'. Another man, who was ten years old during WWII said, 'In comic books Superman kill the Nazis, Batman kills the Nazis, so I also wanted to go and kill the Nazis.' Evidence of this is in the chapter *Boys on the Battlefield: Kid Combatants as Propaganda in World War II* and *Boy Commandos Comic Book as Equipment for Living*. It is quite clear that this group of young readers were captivated and influenced by colourful images, incredible adventures, the superhuman abilities of heroes or clearly defined attitudes. In addition, if comic book stories with a propaganda subtext are accentuated by the absence of a critical view of the world, living patterns, explanatory parental influence or a one-sided and limited perception, the intended impact is all the more effective. It is an indisputable fact that young people are especially easily subject to indoctrination by various ideologies or worldviews, and therefore propaganda has worked very successfully with them, here in a polarised form of the struggle of good against evil - superheroes against the Nazis, Japanese and other enemies.

The polarisation and contrasting behaviour of heroes / antiheroes, friends / enemies, the American political system / hostile political system and others is pointed out in the chapter *Racial Stereotypes and War Propaganda in Captain America* by D. C. Vance. An American hero or political system is always the right one, behaving predictably, honestly and fairly. He does not use deception and scorn to fight the enemy, but he always stands proudly in the face of the enemy. This chapter gives an example of Maxon, an opponent of Captain America, destroying his victims with poison from distance. Captain America, on the other hand, does not rely on sneaking, but on strength. We can say that American heroes, or the American nation in general, always have only positive qualities in propaganda war comics. They are brave, they act fairly, they have a sense of humour, they always play by the rules, they have a protective feeling and, if necessary, they do not hesitate to sacrifice for their nation. On the contrary, all enemies (Germans, Japanese) act cowardly and fraudulently, they are gloomy, do not play by the rules, see betrayal as another means of achieving their goals, fight from ambush and act only for their own benefit. Together with Vance, another of the authors, James



J. Kimble, also notices a different cartoon depiction of American heroes and their enemies. Just as the good are always clean, well-groomed, muscular, modernly equipped, with a radiant smile, with women always devoted to them and with a perfect figure, the enemies are caricatured in monstrous or ridiculous forms. The Germans are often drawn with ominous grins and monocles with distinctive cheekbones dark-looking from under black uniforms. The Japanese, in turn, look like half-naked jungle savages with monkey features. Reality, pointed out by both authors, from the point of view of propaganda, is supposed to have clearly distinguished the warring parties into *them* and *we*.

Sawyer and Buescher focused on the sensitive area of law, torture and killing that appears in propaganda comics. The book cites *Wonder Woman* as an example. In the chapter *Tell the Whole Truth: Feminist Exception in World War II Wonder Woman* finds that the use of inhumane methods of warfare are advocated by two factors. First, in the case of *Wonder Woman* in particular, her methods of torture justify her being on the good side and therefore somehow more right. Second, the position of *Wonder Woman* is highlighted by her feminism, a single and strong woman, which distracts the reader from the real nature that torture or other inhuman treatment is humanly condemned and punished. However, if torture in comics is committed by the enemy, which is very often the case, it deserves the greatest contempt and bloody revenge. One of the group's similar topics is the question of the moral dilemma of justifying the killing that in war can be avoided. The search for an answer is again rationalised in several respects, as Judy and Palmer state in the chapter *Kid Combatants as Propaganda in WWII - Era Comic Books*, despite the fact that the enemies are cruel and spread fear and terror, they will never be able to kill the heroes in comics. Often the enemies are portrayed as stupid, incompetent, clumsy and surprised by the actions of the heroes. Moreover that war normalises violence. In these comics, violence is normal and common, even attractive. The elimination of enemies is often spiced with humorous quips from the heroes with a deliberate omission of the fact that they are also human beings. Scenes of death and dying, often brutal, are not expressed in a sinister or disturbing way in the comics of this kind; on the contrary, the heroes are still praised and decorated. And last but not least, there is the assurance that war is a responsible activity in which everyone must participate, without exception, and everyone can contribute to the defeat of the enemy through its merits. Similarly, in another chapter, *Beyond the Storylines*, Wilt authored *Prize Comics* magazine and *What You Can Do to Win the War*, improve in sports, learn to operate machines, etc.

Last but not least, the authors of the publication also marginally dealt with the ideas that currently (2021) resonate with society worldwide - genderism, feminism, racism / anti-racism. However, it is a question which is the subject-

tive consideration of each reader, whether the social views of the 1940s can be assessed from the perspective of the modern age. However, it is an indisputable benefit, through a historical excursion, to get an idea of how the society of that time perceived these topics and how it dealt with them. It must be said that all the aspects described above appearing in American comics, appeared in exactly the same way in similar printed propaganda materials on the other side of the war. However, since the review concerned a book devoted to American propaganda comics, the reviewer did not explicitly address the other warring party, for example for comparative purposes.

### **Conclusion and summary**

A peer-reviewed book by Goodnow, Kimble et al. (2016) *The Ten Cent War - Comic Books, Propaganda and World War II*, deals with American comic books that were published during World War II. It focuses on a number of aspects of such magazines, but especially on their propaganda side, as one of the other ways to influence public opinion and gain support for the war. Due to the predominance of younger readers, the propagated national values and war effort were embodied in superheroes - Wonder Woman, Superman, Captain America, Uncle Sam, The Sentinels and others, who, as we know, did not disappear with the end of World War II. The authors critically reflected on the sensitive scenes of propaganda comics such as the normalisation of killing and torture, the normalisation of war, the ideological influence on youth, the dangerous polarisation of the world of *them* and *us*. The publication has the character of professional literature, as all conclusions, declaratory statements and information has its origins in the literature, which is duly referenced and cited. For this reason, the book can serve as a high-quality source of information in the preparation of university dissertations or other professional publications on the topic of war propaganda, the psychological effects of propaganda on youth and others.



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## Kate O'Neill: Waste

*Reviewed by Adéla Hofmannová*

This book explores the globally ever-increasing amount of waste from three different angles: waste as unintended by-products, as a resource and as a livelihood. The author, an environmental science professor at the University of California Berkeley, shares a powerful insight into the scene behind the waste processing and explains what really happens after you dump the garbage – where it ends up and how it affects our planet in the long-term, from deadly waste slides, ocean acidification and marine life decay, to the increased amounts of toxic substances in the soil and air, adding to the rapidly speeding climate change. Almost every page offers facts and figures to portray both the severity and importance of this topic.

The international trade with waste is invisible for the consumers as wastes are typically disposed of far from the points of use, often shipped overseas to developing countries and forgotten about. Kate O'Neill does her best to raise the curtain. There are the interests of the brokers, multinational corporations and even individuals who try to capture the profits by exploiting this source rather than caring about the planet, the value is may still hold or the health consequences.

The three largest categories of waste discussed are used electronics (e-waste), food waste and plastic scrap. All of these are different in its nature, in terms of value they may contain, the ways of discarding them, the amount of time they last in the environment before their half-life and the sort of hazards they pose to the waste pickers and to environmental health overall.

The author believes that better waste governance initiatives and mechanisms can help us deal with both the risks and the opportunities associated with the billions of tons of waste we generate each year. This can be achieved through

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stronger relationships between society and government and greater attention to the growing voices of informal waste pickers, environmentalists and civil rights activists.

Throughout the book there are examples of the companies, small businesses or communities across the world who have an exemplary approach to waste management.

A global circular economy with a new waste infrastructure is the ultimate mission as well as updated international treaties and agreements on Waste Disposal. If governments examine this complex problem carefully and implement new strategies and policies, there is hope that waste processing can become safer, preserve jobs for small businesses and ultimately lead to more sustainable life on the planet.

I found the book fascinating and insightful, sparking a fire in me to follow the journey of the products we throw away and think deeply about what could be done better. Although it seems almost like a research paper, an everyday reader can find the read easy and gets a chance to peep at the once invisible scene of waste management. For me it presents a valuable contribution to public awareness, showing ways to make more sustainable lifestyles both as individuals and as a society.

