



Maneuvering between two interests: Islam and Indonesia's global identity the Joko Widodo Administration in 2014-2019

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Abstract

This article discusses how the leadership of the first era of Indonesian President Joko Widodo (2014-2019) managed Islam as one aspect of his country's identity in the global arena. The authors argue that two things influenced the image of Indonesian Islam in the Widodo era. First is the domestic pressure to reclaim the trust of Islamic political groups. Second is a global interest to maintain the status quo as a country with moderate Islamic characteristics that is also active in pursuing world peace. To do this, the authors use a two-level game point of view that sees the constellation of domestic politics and then relates it to how the Widodo government carries out its foreign diplomatic strategy. This article finds that the Widodo administration in the first era could balance the interests of creating an image of a friendly government to Islamic groups. On the other hand, it can also fulfil its commitment to engage in diplomacy as a middle power through strategies dominated by results-oriented bilateralism.

Keywords: *Islam, Indonesia, Joko Widodo, diplomacy*

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Introduction

Indonesia is a relatively young democracy. Although it has been approximately 76 years after its independence, the Indonesian democracy is still undergoing a process of consolidation. After 32 years of experiencing an authoritarian regime under Suharto, the country went through a reformation era post-1998. Since then, Indonesia has experienced a continuous construction of its identity as a new emerging power.

Following Indonesia's transition to the reformation era, several pieces of literature classify Indonesia into a middle power country. This can be seen, for example, from Ping's (2003) article, which examines the identity of Indonesia's middle power through several indicators such as strategic territory, military and economic capabilities, and ideology. For Ping, Indonesia's identity as a middle power became apparent in the country's efforts to reform democracy at home and become actively involved in multilateral organisations such as ASEAN (2003: 44). In other literature, Karim (2018) also includes Indonesia in the middle power category because international expectations for Indonesia's role in the global arena are also increasing. Quoting Jordaan (2003), Indonesia can be said to fall within the typology of "emerging" middle power instead of "traditional" middle power when viewed from its position which is not yet stable, has just experienced democratisation, and has a high associative image as a regional leader.

Quoting Laatikainen (2006), middle power functions as a bridge-builder for dialogue in international politics, so its importance cannot be underestimated. For a middle power country like Indonesia, it is imperative to continuously seek strategies to navigate itself amid turbulent international politics. Compared to other countries, Indonesia's middle position in power relations makes it necessary to have the bargaining power that allows it to do so. However, what is no less crucial is how the middle power country can appear relevant through the international image that it chooses to display.

A middle power country has limited capabilities in hard power aspects such as the military and economy. Therefore, the more viable option for a middle power country is soft power. Borrowing Nye (1990: 167), soft power is related to how a country can appear as a legitimate actor in the international world without using coercive power such as military or economic pressure. Rather than using those coercive powers, middle powers use public diplomacy by displaying their image to attract foreign actors towards their needs. For Sukma (2011: 92), this power can be found in democracy and Islam, which he defines as the main assets of Indonesian public diplomacy to remain relevant in global politics. In another literature, Azra (2019) also adds that Indonesia's position as a middle power cannot be separated from its ability to balance three things: modernity, democracy, and Islam. Bringing up the importance of Islam as a component of this middle power identity, Azra says that Indonesian Islam itself has a "middle path" pattern (*Wasatiyyah*), which he defines as different from Middle Eastern Islam or the Indian Peninsula. This middle path pattern of Islam consists of moderation, toleration, and inclusion as its virtues.

A number of studies have indeed been dedicated to looking at Indonesia's diplomatic position in the Islamic context. For example, Hoesterey (2013) attempts to highlight how the 1998 Crisis and the 2011 Arab Spring can be compared in terms of the relationship between Islam and democracy. Sukma (2011) also considers that the pattern of post-New Order Indonesia is characterized by the rise of political Islam. Moving on from mainstream studies on diplomacy, other articles using a grassroots perspective also see that Indonesia is a country that has a sufficient role as one of the centers of Islamic knowledge and has its own Islamic

style socio-culturally. For example, articles from Azra (2004) and Laffan (2011) with their argument that as a Muslim-majority country, Indonesia contributes to Islamic treasures. In addition, other articles such as Seise's (2011) also see that the difference in Indonesian Islamic identity lies in the influence of *Sufis* who have historically been the spreaders of Islam in Indonesia. Within the context of modern Indonesian politics of Islam, there have been articles reviewing this period from perspectives such as the politics of the *ulama* (Winarni 2014), the role of Islamic organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama (Arifianto 2016), and the recent polarization of traditionalist versus conservative Islamic groups in electoral politics (Wanto and Sebastian 2022).

However, this research raises a different point of view and has not been widely reviewed, namely how Indonesia's Islamic identity in terms of foreign policy is trying to be displayed during the transitional period of government. In this case, what this paper discusses is Joko Widodo's government in the first period. This paper observes that this topic is interesting to study, because from the perspective of diplomacy studies, it is important not only to see the local-electoral dimension, but also to see how Joko Widodo in his new government tries to navigate himself amidst the need to continue the resurrected Islamic identity post-Reformation which has returned to the surface of the Indonesian politics. Apart from that, it is also important to see how this new government navigates its power in the midst of Islamist groups who are often considered not to be its main electoral constituency group.

This research is qualitative research with a descriptive method, which serves to present a thick and detailed picture of a phenomenon, namely Indonesia's diplomatic identity in the Joko Widodo era 2014-2019. In doing so, this research uses secondary data studies which consist of searching scientific articles and media releases to support the analysis.

Islam as the Indonesian Diplomatic Identity Post-Reformation

Despite adhering to the liberal democratic system, the Indonesian Government does not embrace secularism as its crucial tenet. Religion still plays a significant role in the socio-political aspect of Indonesians. Constitutionally, Indonesia is not a theocratic state. Nevertheless, this country still recognises belief in God as a core principle, which is stated in *Pancasila* (the five principles), Indonesia's national ideology. Indonesia does not explicitly mention a particular religion as its basis through this ideology. However, it manages its exceptionally plural territory and has many adherents of other religions. This compromise has notably contributed to Indonesia's position, which tends to be moderate in viewing religion as a reality of life. Using Berger's (2011) logic, religion remains the "sacred canopy" that provides social and political cohesion to unite the otherwise diverse Indonesian people. Religion is one of the main determinants in political life and public policy in a more general sense for the Indonesian context (Woodward, 2010).

Regarding religion, Islam undeniably holds a predominant position in constructing the Indonesian national identity. Despite acknowledging six official religions, it has been a popular fact that Indonesia is a country where more than 80 percent of its citizens adhere to Islam. Not only that, Indonesia is home to the largest Muslim population in the world. During the struggle against colonialism, Islam was also a formidable force to mobilise nationalism. Therefore, Islam has always been deeply embedded within the identity of Indonesia as a developing nation. This idea was affirmed by several authors such as Vandenbosch (1952), Noer (1986), Kahin (2003), and Intan (2006), who highlight the importance of Islam in the process of nation-building in Indonesia.

In the Suharto era, the power of political Islam was reduced through the application of the “*asas tunggal Pancasila*” (The sole principle of *Pancasila*) as the foundation of Indonesia’s political life (Baswedan, 2004). Multiple Islamic political parties were merged into a new party called the United Development Party (PPP), which could not exert sufficient challenge against Suharto’s regime and his big-tent Party of Functional Groups (Golkar). Undoubtedly, reformation and its promise of democracy have become a breath of fresh air for groups that have been marginalised, including political Islam.

The return of the power of Islam in Indonesian politics was marked by the election of Abdurrahman Wahid, a Muslim cleric, to become president of Indonesia through the People’s Consultative Assembly session in 1999. Wahid’s leadership era was brief, but he provided a solid foundation for restoring the image of Indonesian Islam as the humanist and moderate Islam. During his leadership, Wahid had many challenges, especially in managing the fragmentation of Muslims while preventing the birth of extremist groups born with the collapse of the authoritarian regime (Sauki, 2018: 453). Another thing that the Wahid government has done is to seek resolution of cases of human rights violations (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Republik Indonesia, 2012). Wahid was quite keen on this issue because his reign was in an era that was notably inhabited by many problems after the fall of the Suharto era and had not been handled by Habibie’s extremely short governance (1998-1999). Wahid also briefly initiated the normalisation of Indonesia’s relations with Israel, which is considered taboo in Indonesian politics, given Indonesia’s historical commitment not to recognise Israel until independence for Palestine is guaranteed. Wahid argued that normalising relations needed to be done so that Indonesia could play a more active role in fighting for Palestinian independence by increasing its bargaining position in front of Israel. However, this idea has not materialised due to solid domestic resistance.

The era of Abdurrahman Wahid was followed by the leadership of Megawati Sukarnoputri (2001-2004). Although relatively short, it records noteworthy milestones regarding how Indonesia constructed its Islamic identity. Megawati’s leadership has emphasised Indonesia’s position as a Muslim-majority country which is moderate in several respects. First, the era of Megawati witnesses Indonesia being included in the Global War on Terror agenda to overcome terrorism in Indonesia, especially after the Bali Bombing attack (Umar, 2016: 419). This history seems to confirm Indonesia’s position in its global Islamic identity. The narrative of Indonesian Islam in this era has also been predominantly shaped by the post-9/11 spirit that seeks to address global community concerns about the rise of Islam as a determinant of Indonesia’s national politics (Sukma, 2011: 92). In addition, the second aspect is the emergence of Megawati as a female leader, as if it shows that the Islam adopted by Indonesia is progressive and does not prevent women from becoming leaders (Thompson, 2002; Van Wichelen, 2006; Bennett, 2010). Although the idea of women’s leadership was met with considerable domestic opposition because it was considered against the conservative interpretation of Islam (Allen, 2001; Putra, 2019), Megawati’s rise as president in 2001 was ultimately seen by the world a remarkable achievement.

The Yudhoyono era (2004-2014) was when Indonesia increasingly affirmed its diplomatic identity as a country with a moderate Islamic pattern. In this era, Yudhoyono tends to be more proactive in paying attention to Indonesia’s multilateral diplomacy to realise public diplomacy on Indonesian Islam. Yudhoyono himself emphasised that Indonesia is a country that has succeeded in combining Islam, democracy, and modernity (Alvian et al., 2019). This commitment to identity is increasingly supported by Indonesia’s economic and political

conditions, far more stable than the beginning of the reform era. This allows Indonesia to maneuver further as a middle power country. Yudhoyono affirmed this moderate Islamic identity through efforts to organise interfaith forums, for example, the Regional Interfaith Dialogue within the Southeast Asia and Southwest Pacific (2004) and the Asia-Europe (ASEM) Interfaith Dialogue (2005), which later has become a major annual event. In addition, Indonesia was also an active participant in the Non-Aligned Movement Interfaith Dialogue in March 2010 (Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Brussels, 2018). The construction of Islam as one of Indonesia's global identities during Yudhoyono's administration was primarily supported by the opinion of the Indonesian Muslim community, such as in terms of support for Palestine and the deradicalisation project to prevent terrorism (Songbatumis, 2011; Wicaksana, 2012).

Islam and the Joko Widodo Presidency (2014-2019)

In the previous explanations, we have seen that Islam has always been in the discourse on post-reformation Indonesian identity in the global forum. At the very least, every incumbent president cannot simply rule out Islam as an essential constituent aspect of Indonesia's identity as a middle power. Suppose we relate this reality to the concept that middle power countries need to be "bridges for dialogue in international politics." In that case, Indonesia's position and Islamic identity become a bridge between the Islamic world and the Western world (Anwar, 2011). Indonesia is also constantly demanding to display good international citizenship by providing an alternative to misconceptions about Islam which are sometimes seen as inconsistent with democracy.

In this section, the authors will discuss how the Joko Widodo administration in its first period (2014-2019) positioned political Islam in his administration and within the construction of Indonesia's diplomatic identity. The authors argue that the image of Indonesian Islam in the Widodo era was influenced by two things: (1) the domestic pressure to reclaim the trust of Islamic political groups and (2) the existence of global interest to maintain the status quo as a country with moderate Islamic characteristics that is also active in pursuing world peace.

Joko Widodo is the seventh president of Indonesia and the second president after Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to be popularly elected by the direct voting system. As the successor to the Yudhoyono administration, which was quite remarkable in performing the Indonesian public diplomacy on Islam, the Widodo administration is therefore left with a challenge to continue the legacy of the Yudhoyono administration in displaying the image of Indonesia as a Muslim-majority country that upholds democracy and human rights as its global identity.

The position of Islam in Widodo's leadership discourse is quite contentious. During his presidential campaign, Widodo was often the target of black campaigns that questioned his commitment to Islam or even the reality of his Islamic faith itself. For example, some unverified sources spread rumours that Widodo was not a Muslim but a Christian Chinese whose real name was Wie Jo Koh or Heribertus Joko Widodo (Januru, 2016: 184). There were also claims saying that Widodo was a covert communist, associating him with the Indonesian Communist Party, whose presence has now been banned after the 30 September 1965 incident (Miller, 2018: 298-299).

Some factors contribute to doubts regarding the future of Indonesian Islamic identity in Widodo's Government. Winarni (2014) argues that one of the factors was the party that was his political vehicle. Widodo comes from the Indonesian Democratic Party-Struggle (PDIP),

synonymous with the *abangan* or secular Indonesians. This has resulted in Islamist groups tending to hesitate to support Widodo. Another aspect that made Widodo less popular among political Islam groups was that he had been considered to neglect his mandate of Jakarta. Widodo was elected governor of Jakarta in 2012 and had claimed to have no interest in running for the presidential election. However, in 2014 he surprisingly took part in the election, leaving the leadership position with two years remaining. In addition, his deputy in Jakarta, a double minority (Christian Chinese) from Belitung named Basuki Tjahaja Purnama or Ahok, also became another obstacle. Widodo's ascension to the presidency means that Ahok would replace him as the governor. The potential for Ahok's rise was heavily opposed by some conservative Muslims who viewed that a non-Muslim is forbidden to be a Muslim leader (Aswar, 2018). A famous Indonesian preacher, Bachtiar Nasir, even went as far as saying that voting for Widodo meant "one step closer to making Indonesia an infidel (*kafir*) country" (Osman and Waikar, 2014: 106). There was a *fatwa* (religious opinion) from a right-wing Islamic organisation called the Indonesian Ummah Ulama Forum (FUUI) which stated that it was *haram* (forbidden) for Indonesian Muslims to vote for Widodo in the 2014 presidential election. Widodo was considered to have the potential to "threaten Muslims' existence" (Putra, 2014).

In the end, Islamic-leaning parties were even more determined to support their rival, the former General of the Army, Prabowo Subianto (Winarni, 2014: 266). This condition once made Subianto excel in a poll held by the Indonesian Survey Institute, where the former general gained more support from Muslim voters (47.30%) than Joko Widodo (46.39%) (Indonesian Survey Institute, 2014). However, Widodo won the general election in the end because PDIP managed to secure a coalition with the National Awakening Party (PKB), a nationalist party with a strong traditionalist Islamic mass base affiliated to the most prominent Islamic organisation in Indonesia, the *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU). Widodo's victory was also supported by his decision to pick Jusuf Kalla as vice president. Kalla himself is a senior politician from Golkar who has a special closeness to Muslim political constituents because of his background as an alumnus of the Islamic Student Association (HMI).

The second challenge from political Islam groups to the Widodo administration came from the 212 Movement in 2016. This action was preceded by a statement by Ahok, now governor of Jakarta, on his political safari in the Kepulauan Seribu. On that occasion, Ahok made a speech urging residents not to be easily provoked by people who use *Surah Al-Maidah* (a chapter in the Quran) as justification for not voting in favour of non-Muslim leaders. The snippet of the speech went viral on the internet, and Ahok was considered to have committed blasphemy (Aswar, 2018: 66). A large demonstration was held on 2 December 2016 (hence 212) at Jakarta's National Monument. This demonstration was held with the main agenda to push for a prison sentence for Ahok. Organisers claimed that the movement participants reached a gargantuan figure of seven million people. However, a more reasonable analysis estimates that demonstrators were around five hundred thousand people (Franciska, 2016). This movement was initiated by several Islamic organisations from Jakarta and many regions in Indonesia. One of the organisations considered dominant in this movement was the Islamic Defenders Front, led by Rizieq Shihab, a figure who was later seen as the supreme leader (*imam besar*) for the masses of the 212 Movement. Although the agenda to imprison Ahok was the main goal of the demonstration, Widodo also became the target of criticism for being seen as too slow to take firm action. In addition, Widodo was also considered the person responsible for Ahok's ascension to the governorship.

From the previous discussion, we can see that Widodo had considerable homework before he could further manage the image of Indonesian Islam on the international stage. First of all, he was required to demonstrate his commitment to Islam for his domestic constituents, who put doubt in him. Not to mention, the previous Yudhoyono administration had been quite successful in minimising significant turmoil and resistance from political Islam groups in its policies. Zaman (2020) stated that these kinds of resistances have become inputs for Widodo's policies regarding Islam, both at home and abroad. Since his promotion to become a presidential candidate, Widodo has always been overshadowed by an anti-Islam stigma, either because of his secular upbringing and knowledge of Islam, which is considered lacking in depth, or because his policies are considered less in favour of Islamic political groups. To overcome this, at the beginning of his administration, Widodo made several policies that sought to attract the sympathy of Muslim political groups. For example, he made 22 October National Santri Day, celebrating the struggle of the *santri* (Islamic scholars) in liberating Indonesia from colonialism. The date was taken to celebrate the history in which Hasyim Asyari, the founder of Nahdlatul Ulama, called on the Indonesian people to continue to carry out resistance to the Dutch occupation who tried to re-occupy Indonesia after the defeat of Japan in World War II. Another policy made by Widodo was to establish the International Islamic University of Indonesia (UIII). According to the Minister of Religion Lukman Hakim Saifuddin, the university was established as Widodo's commitment to making Indonesia one of the fulcrums of global Islamic civilisation (Fabian, 2018). In addition, Widodo also established *waqf* (endowment funds) banks in several provinces such as Banten, West Java, and East Java to help micro and small industries (Jordan, 2019). In addition, Herdiansyah et al. (2017) also mention how Widodo tried to neutralise negative opinions about his commitment to Islam through visits to Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*). For example, he visited *pesantrens* in Solo and Surabaya in April 2015, Cirebon in January 2016, Tegal in June 2016, and Serang in October 2016.

On the international aspect, unlike the Yudhoyono government, which tends to use multilateralism to promote the image of moderate Islam aggressively, the Widodo government tends to be more nationalistic, where his administration gave more emphasis to national stability and sovereignty (Alvian et al., 2018: 163-164). However, the Widodo government still acknowledged the status quo that Indonesia is a middle power country that relies heavily on its Muslim identity as a diplomatic tool. At the beginning of his administration, President Widodo set four priorities for Indonesia's foreign policy: maintaining state sovereignty, protecting Indonesian citizens abroad, increasing economic diplomacy, and increasing Indonesia's role and contribution in the international world. In addition to the four foreign policy priorities, eight sub-policies were outlined within the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. One notable point among the eight policies was to increase the role and influence of Indonesia as a middle power country in the international world, especially concerning Indonesia's Muslim majority status. To realise this policy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also formulated a unique strategy in addressing issues related to the Islamic world, such as support for Palestine, the resolution of the Rohingya conflict, and the humanitarian crisis and peace in Afghanistan (Arfino, 2020: 72-73).

In the case of Palestine, Widodo acknowledged this issue as a foreign policy priority. In a press conference at the Bogor Palace, December 2017, Widodo emphasised Indonesia's stance on the Palestinian issue. Jokowi said that he and the Indonesian people remain consistent with the Palestinian people fighting for their rights. On various occasions, the Indonesian

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Retno Marsudi, has also always said that the Palestinian struggle is “at the heart of Indonesia’s foreign policy” (Saragih, 2018: 141). Some policies regarding the issue of Palestine in the Widodo era were to host the 2016 Summit, which discussed Palestine and Al Quds. Second, Indonesia was also active in the Peace Conference initiated by France and became the party that pushed for the Organisation on Islamic Cooperation (OIC) ministerial meeting after the riots in Jerusalem. Third, Indonesia has also established an Honorary Consulate in Ramallah to better approach the issues affecting the Palestinian people. Fourth, one of the notable actions done by Indonesia in favour of the Palestinians was an outright rejection of a decision of the US and Australia to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel in 2018. Not only did Indonesia oppose the acknowledgment, but it also pushed the OIC members to reject that unilateral claim. The two-states solution with East Jerusalem belonging to Palestine should always be the priority to pursue.

Assistance for the Rohingya is also on Jokowi’s foreign policy agenda. The Widodo administration sees that the multilateral route is less effective in dealing with the Rohingya problem. Therefore, the Government was keener to use bilateralism to conduct humanitarian diplomacy. For instance, in September 2017, the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Retno Marsudi, held a meeting with Prime Minister Aung San Suu Kyii and proposed a “4+1” solution, namely: (1) restoration of stability and security; (2) maximum restraint and refrain from using violence; (3) protection of all people regardless of ethnicity and religion in the Rakhine State; (4) opening access to humanitarian aids; and one extra solution to establish an Advisory Commission for Rakhine State under the leadership of Koffi Annan. The following day, Indonesia also visited Bangladesh to bilaterally discuss the condition of Rohingya refugee camps, considering that the country is a destination for Rohingya refugees. Third, Indonesia worked together with the Islamic humanitarian group called the Medical Emergency Rescue Committee (MER-C) to build a hospital in Rakhine State. The government-aided worth US\$1.9 million in funding the hospital project. Finally, Indonesia also embraced Islamic organisations, such as NU and Muhammadiyah, by establishing the Indonesian Humanitarian Alliance (IHA) as an umbrella organisation in providing aid to the Rohingyas in Myanmar. (Iskandar, 2016).

Third, another priority of global Islamic diplomacy carried out by Indonesia in Widodo’s first term was Afghanistan. Peace efforts in Afghanistan have been a concern of President Joko Widodo’s Government since 2016. In April 2017, the President of Afghanistan, Ashraf Ghani, paid a state visit to Indonesia. This overseas state visit to Indonesia was the first ever to be done by an Afghan leader (Kuwado, 2017). The state visit was bilateral with the main agenda to discuss peace-building and capacity-building strategies for Afghanistan. During the visit, Ghani expressed his admiration for Indonesia as the largest Muslim country that has succeeded in creating unity and peace, considering the diversity of Indonesia’s population. At the same time, Widodo demonstrated his commitment to bring about peace in Afghanistan in solidarity with the Muslim-majority country. In addition, Indonesia under Widodo also sponsored a training entitled “Promotion of Tolerance, Pluralism, and Democracy: Experiences and Lessons Learned” for Afghan diplomats. Through this forum, the Indonesian Government shares experiences in realising unity in a pluralistic society with the integration of Pancasila, Islam, and democracy. Since the early days of Widodo’s administration, Indonesia has conducted 19 capacity-building programmes for Afghanistan (Arfino, 2020: 86-89).

Maneuvering between two interests

Concerning the domestic pressure experienced by Widodo at home, Widodo's decision not to abandon the Islam-based diplomacy of his predecessors was a rational choice. On the other hand, it can also be said to be his way of accommodating the aspirations of political Islam groups, which doubted his loyalty to Islam. According to a two-level game perspective, Widodo is faced with two competing interests: maintaining domestic legitimacy and responding to challenges from international structures (Hermann and Hagan, 1998). In the case of global diplomacy with an Islamic theme, Widodo's attention to this issue can be a window of opportunity to deter resistance from Muslim opposition groups. Political Islam groups, especially those fronted by the 212 Movement, have a significant concern for Indonesia's involvement in establishing solidarity with oppressed Muslims in other parts of the world.

Widodo's inclination to use bilateralism in his diplomatic efforts reflects his foreign policy outline that tends to be pragmatic and results-oriented. Widodo is more interested in carrying out cost-effective activities and can fulfil his national interests rather than contributing in general to the international community. For Widodo, multilateralism is a way to support bilateralism (Rosyidin, 2020). We can see this as an example of how Widodo used the OIC as a channel to voice the issue of Palestinian independence, something his Government has been working on bilaterally through the establishment of a consulate general in Ramallah.

Hill (2003) says that foreign policies are influenced by the constellation of domestic politics and international political conditions. Debora and Sulaiman (2019) argue that leaders have two alternatives in managing competing domestic and international interests through the same idea. The first is to avoid domestic debates to accommodate opposition groups by giving them what they want and thus only involve little risk. On the other hand, leaders can seek to combine their domestic positions by pushing a foreign policy that can mobilize new support, suppress the opposition, or dampen the opposition. In the case of Indonesia's efforts to project its global identity as a Muslim country committed to world peace, it was clear that the Widodo administration in the 2014-2019 period had attempted to balance the two. Widodo's leadership was relatively able to display symbolic alignments at home to show an image that can clear the doubts of political Islam groups about his commitment to Islam. On the other hand, Widodo's foreign policies could also answer the aspirations of political Islam groups who also demand concrete actions from the Indonesian Government to maintain its image as a globally-respected Muslim-majority middle power.

Concluding this article, the author reiterates that the Widodo administration in the 2014-2019 period demonstrated a nuanced approach in managing competing domestic and international interests. By projecting Indonesia's global identity as a Muslim country committed to world peace, Widodo aimed to address the concerns of political Islam groups at home while simultaneously meeting the expectations of the international community.

The first strategy was to avoid domestic debates and accommodate opposition groups by granting their demands, which involves minimal risk. This approach had helped in maintaining a sense of stability and appeasement at home. The second strategy, which Widodo seemed to employ, involves aligning domestic positions by pushing foreign policies that can mobilize new support, suppress opposition, or dampen dissent. In this case, Widodo sought to exhibit symbolic alignments at home, proving his commitment to Islam and addressing doubts from political Islam groups within the country by committing to popular issues such as the Palestinian independence.

Furthermore, by crafting foreign policies that align with Indonesia's global identity as a Muslim-majority middle power committed to world peace, Widodo's administration aimed to meet the expectations of political Islam groups, both domestically and internationally. By doing so, he could bolster Indonesia's image as a globally-respected Muslim-majority country while balancing the interests of various stakeholders at home. Overall, the case of Indonesia's foreign policy during Widodo's leadership exemplifies the complexities that leaders face in navigating the intricate web of domestic and international politics. By adopting a balanced approach, Widodo sought to harmonize the diverse interests at play, contributing to Indonesia's efforts to project its global identity as a Muslim-majority country committed to world peace. However, it is essential to acknowledge that foreign policy decisions are continually evolving and are subject to changes based on shifting domestic and international circumstances.

Conclusion

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