

# The Attempted Extension of the Indonesian Developmental State towards Africa

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## ABSTRACT

Under President Jokowi, Indonesia's foreign policy towards Africa has become more pragmatic through a multi-bilateral scheme, the Indonesia-Africa Forum, launched in April 2018. Despite the overwhelming economic diplomacy discourse, in reality, Indonesia's African foreign policy reveals the need for expansion of the Indonesian developmental state to serve its highest interests relating to regime stability, sovereignty, security or political legitimacy. Economic development and thus the African expansion serve this *raison d'État*. Africa offers a playground for Indonesia to showcase its developmental success, notably in infrastructure. The continent could also help Indonesia with great power management by offering a new kind of leverage; while being part of Indonesia's road to great power itself. Indonesia will need to raise its intellectual game and knowledge of Africa; and of the mechanisms and reasons of its strategic importance.

**Kata kunci:** Indonesia, external power in Africa, Jokowi

## ABSTRAK

*Di bawah pemerintahan Presiden Jokowi, politik luar negeri Indonesia terhadap Afrika menjadi lebih bersifat pragmatis melalui skema multi-bilateral, Indonesia-Africa Forum, yang diadakan pada April 2018. Terlepas dari wacana diplomasi ekonomi yang diutamakan, pada kenyataannya, politik luar negeri Indonesia terhadap Afrika menunjukkan perlunya ekspansi Indonesia sebagai negara pembangunan untuk mempertahankan kepentingan tertinggi (raison d'État) yang berkaitan dengan stabilitas rezim, kedaulatan, keamanan, atau legitimasi politik. Pembangunan ekonomi dan ekspansi ke Afrika dengan demikian mendukung kepentingan tertinggi Indonesia. Afrika dapat menjadi rekan bagi Indonesia untuk menunjukkan keberhasilannya, terutama di bidang infrastruktur. Benua tersebut pun dapat membantu Indonesia mengelola sumber dayanya dengan menawarkan jenis pengaruh baru; sekaligus menjadi bagian dari jalan Indonesia menjadi kekuatan besar. Indonesia perlu meningkatkan pengetahuannya tentang Afrika; dan tentang dinamika serta alasan mengapa benua tersebut strategis.*

**Keywords:** Indonesia, kekuatan eksternal di Afrika, Jokowi

## INTRODUCTION

The launch of the Indonesia-Africa Forum (IAF), Indonesia's first Africa+1 forum, in April 2018 in Bali underlined President Jokowi's new foreign policy prioritization of Africa; mostly through economic diplomacy, as indicated in the Strategic Plan for 2020-2024 elaborated by the Africa Directorate of the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Kemlu). Given the lateness of Indonesia's economic engagement with the African continent despite its Afro-Asian historical narrative as the host of the Bandung Conference or *Konferensi Asia Afrika* (KAA) in 1955 (Abdulgani 1981; Lee 2010; Acharya 2016), this pragmatic multi-bilateral approach better corresponds to Jokowi's low-profile and entrepreneurial style;

allowing to fast-track Indonesia's projection towards Africa (BPPK-Kemlu and UMY 2016; Anya 2018; Kemlu 2018; 2020).<sup>1</sup>

Alongside the IAF, the new framework comprises the Indonesia-Africa Maritime Dialogue (IAMD) co-organized by Kemlu with the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries in October 2018 with the two main themes of maritime security and sustainable fisheries; and the Indonesia-Africa Infrastructure Dialogue (IAID) first held in August 2019 notably supporting an increased presence of Indonesian State-owned enterprises (SOEs) in Africa in the infrastructure sector (Dwifiani 2019; Kemlu 2020).<sup>2</sup>

This article briefly describes Indonesia's new African approach, carried out by President Jokowi in alliance with his main backer and most important leader in his government General (Ret.) Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan (LBP), Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs and Investment, as an extension of the Indonesian developmental state; seeking increased domestic political legitimacy through perceived economic success abroad and the promotion of an Indonesian development or developmental model notably in matters of infrastructure (Dorigné-Thomson 2022).<sup>3</sup> Although still relatively modest, the new African effort helps to revisit or at least learn more about Indonesian foreign policy and the ambitions, limitations, and possibly promising future of Indonesia and the Indonesian state in the global polity. Being still in its early stages, the framework reveals an ambitious Indonesia; ready to move beyond Southeast Asia. Africa could also represent a new type of leverage and balancing for Indonesia in its great power management; notably through better ASEAN instrumentalisation. Yet, given the crucial presidential weight in Indonesian foreign policy definition and implementation, it might also be abandoned by Jokowi's successors if they define Indonesia's national interests and focus differently according to their own mindset.

## THEORETICAL APPROACH AND RESEARCH METHOD

Given that no single theory or paradigm can capture the reality of the Indonesian polity or foreign policy, approximating the explanatory mechanisms of Indonesia's foreign policy demands a creative approach using theoretical pluralism given Indonesia's complexity as a giant, almost continental, vastly populated, emerging power with dynamic domestic politics (Nguiragool 2012; Reinhardt 1971). Transcending the limiting question of paradigms, eclectic analysis is thus applied with a holistic and flexible framework associating various analytical levels and types of factors. Agency responds to structure as well as material elements to ideational ones (Santikajaya 2017; Shekhar 2018).

Based on several years of thorough research, based in Indonesia, and original primary data obtained qualitatively through exclusive in-depth interviews notably with Indonesian and African diplomats, largely through snowballing, this analytical descriptive study is mostly focused on state power and its main protagonists, especially at the presidential level.

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<sup>1</sup> "I emphasize that Africa is one of Indonesia's foreign policy priorities." said President Jokowi when receiving the then President of the Republic of Niger Mahamadou Issoufou in Jakarta in October 2017 (Lumanauw and WBP 2017).

<sup>2</sup> Following the tradition of other Africa+1 forums, Kemlu communicates that the IAF brought in \$586.56 million in deals and the IAID \$822 million (Kemlu 2020).

<sup>3</sup> Dorigné-Thomson's dissertation studies extensively Indonesia's contemporary foreign policy towards Africa especially under Jokowi; in comparison with other major external powers in Africa such as China, India, Japan, South Korea, Turkey or Brazil; and Western powers like the US, France, the UK or Israel for example (Dorigné-Thomson 2022).

## ANALYSIS

Aspiring to a post-ASEAN foreign policy (Sukma 2009; Suryadinata 1996), President Jokowi shares with LBP a better awareness of the strategic significance of Africa in the world and for Indonesia. Jokowi designated LBP as Chair of the Indonesian Infrastructure Task Force for Africa.<sup>4</sup> This Task Force seeks infrastructure and construction projects in Africa for Indonesian SOEs; following also the SOEs “Go Global” program (Kemlu 2019; Kemenkomarves 2018; M. C. Anwar 2020). Kemlu diplomats populate the Task Force alongside LBP’s own team. They try also to negotiate free and preferential trade deals with African countries and Regional Economic Communities (RECs). The Minister of Foreign Affairs Retno Marsudi has managed to survive both Jokowi periods and appeared increasingly enthusiastic about Africa. Yet, an elite entitlement (McRae 2019), Indonesian foreign policy remains mainly a presidential prerogative. The President involves or nominates his allies and entourage to handle foreign policy issues of his choice. LBP appears as the main political and thus foreign policy force in Indonesia under Jokowi. His power progressively increased during the presidency. The African policy is no exception: LBP’s touch is overwhelming. Kemlu could not deliver such a coordinated effort through government and bureaucracy without the leadership of LBP who can cut through red tape and bottlenecks thanks to his military background and pragmatism.<sup>5</sup>

Section A of the first part of the final communiqué of the KAA prioritises economic cooperation notably foreign investment and technical assistance for the buildout of Afro-Asian relations; insisting on “the urgency of promoting economic development in the Asian-African region” (Lee 2009).<sup>6</sup> In that perspective, Indonesia’s new African endeavour should not be seen as a departure from the soul of Bandung towards more mercantilism and the mere pursuit of material gains; but as an actual return to both the letter and spirit of Bandung as presented in the original documents of the Conference. The Jokowi era’s economic and more pragmatic engagement with Africa, or at least the beginning of such an effort, can be perceived as a sort of return to the dawn of Afro-Asia; attempting to accomplish unfulfilled mutual development promises.

Following the “Bandung Message 2015” resulting from the 2015 Asia-Africa Summit held in Jakarta in conjunction with the KAA’s 60th-anniversary commemoration, Jokowi pushed to break the underachievement of Afro-Asian trade and investment (KAA 2015; Sambijantoro 2015);<sup>7</sup> requiring tariff suppression through FTAs and PTAs.<sup>8</sup> For Jokowi, the Bandung Spirit can be realised through business. He perceives huge investment opportunities in agribusiness, energy, manufacturing, and of course infrastructure and construction. Jokowi

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<sup>4</sup> Africa is labelled as a “non-traditional market” in Indonesia’s official development plans alongside Latin America or the Middle East. Africa therefore does not appear on paper as yet of the highest strategic importance for Indonesia. However, the direct attention and implication of Jokowi and LBP in the African policy reveals that Africa’s status for Indonesia’s highest elites has been raised.

<sup>5</sup> Interviews with Teuku Faizasyah, DG of information and public diplomacy, Kemlu, 17 and 29 September 2021, Jakarta.

<sup>6</sup> The call to move “Beyond the Bandung Spirit” to focus on economic cooperation, therefore, seemed unnecessary (Marsudi 2017).

<sup>7</sup> According to 2019 IMF Nominal GDP data, Asia and Africa represent almost 40% of the global GDP.

<sup>8</sup> Indonesia signed its first PTA in Africa with Mozambique in August 2019. Historically the Indian Ocean constitutes the core of the Afro-Asian movement. The five KAA organizers were Indian Ocean Asian countries: Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Myanmar and Sri Lanka; forming the Conference of South-East Asian Prime Ministers, or the Colombo Powers. Now considered as part of South Asia, at the time, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka were included in the Southeast Asia region (Acharya 2011).

thus announced, unconsciously at the time, the future focus of the IAF, organised in April 2018, back in 2015 during the major Afro-Asian Summit (Setkab 2015). Politically for Jokowi, engaging more with Africa also supports his positioning as Sukarno's political heir, the father of Asia-Africa and Bandung; and his domestic legitimacy. Africa plays a role in Jokowi's power consolidation in alliance with LBP. The African policy contributes to gaining more autonomy from his major political backers including former President Megawati Soekarnoputri<sup>9</sup> or Nasdem Party Chairman Surya Paloh.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, Africa shelters ideological and material interests for such prominent Indonesian leaders notably relating to Chinese networks strongly engaged with the African continent. The new Africa policy centralises under the presidential umbrella the management of Africa and related networks and opportunities linked both to African elites and major external powers in Africa such as China, the US, Israel, France or the UK. Foreign policy in Indonesia has always been "very political" (Weinstein 1976). Domestic power struggles and their result determine political legitimacy and therefore foreign policy capacity (Sukma 2003; Nabbs-Keller 2013). Africa is not the most prominent or visible foreign policy issue in Indonesia today. A still limited group of elites takes an interest in the continent so that Africa cannot be said to be a highly contested issue for example in the foreign affairs committee in the parliament or in the media. This explains Indonesia's late contemporary engagement. Nevertheless, the highest leaders of the country are now aware of and pay attention to its importance.

The Afro-Asian linkage of the IAF is thus well established and can be seen as a response to the complicated implementation of the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership (NAASP). Indeed, the operationalisation of the NAASP as an Afro-Asian multilateral platform or bridge indeed failed until now; despite Indonesia's dedication to the cause; marking the remaining vagueness or a lack of political will and imagination in the utilisation of Afro-Asian Solidarity and Bandung Spirit narratives from Afro-Asian nations especially major powers of the transregion (Dorigné-Thomson 2022; NAASP 2005; Lee 2010). Forming an Afro-Asian multilateral entity necessitates the existence of policy entrepreneurs nourished by an Afro-Asian epistemic community inexistent today; with a deep transcontinental mutual understanding (Parsons 2002).<sup>11</sup> Contrary to China with the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Indonesia does not possess the material and ideational capacities to lead the NAASP due to its complexity, vastness, and ambiguity.<sup>12</sup> The NAASP stalemate apparently hurts the concept of

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<sup>9</sup> As the daughter of Sukarno, founder of the KAA, Megawati follows her father's legacy; at least discursively. The Sukarno name carries a special meaning among many African leaders. After then President Jacob Zuma respectfully visited her home in Jakarta in March 2017 to discuss issues linked to "government, economy, and political party cooperation", Megawati proposed in April 2017, month of the 62th anniversary of the Bandung Conference, the organization of a second KAA to deal with the new problems faced by Asia-Africa; to no avail. Jokowi did not bow to this official wish (Fachrudin 2017; Perwitasari 2017). The question of a "second Bandung" is a long story.

<sup>10</sup> Sam Pa the infamous Chinese intermediary in Africa arrested for corruption in China in October 2015 was an investor in Surya Paloh's oil and property businesses. Paloh introduced Sam Pa to then Governor of Jakarta Jokowi and brokered a G-to-G oil deal between Angola and Indonesia just after Jokowi's election as President in 2014 (Fitriyani and Agustinus 2021; Gliemourinsie 2014; Putra 2015).

<sup>11</sup> Africa feels dominated by external powers through multi-bilateral schemes. The articulation between the AU, RECs and African states defending their sovereignty is an ongoing issue; and the subject of the Kagame Report (Mthemba and Mabera 2021). Although laudable as a first step, the IAF is already an obsolete scheme in reality; unfavoured by Africans.

<sup>12</sup> Adapting Oran Young's leadership model of regime building, He and Feng indicate an absence of institutionalization relating to the Indo-Pacific results from a lack of material and ideational leadership. In the Asia Pacific region, a certain degree of institutionalization occurred notably with the APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) inter-governmental forum thanks to the role of an effective epistemic community (Young 1991).

ASEAN centrality since, like with minilaterals such as the QUAD or AUKUS (Beeson 2022), ASEAN centrality can be seen to be bypassed by the Africa+1 Forums of major Asian powers such as Japan's *Tokyo International Conference on African Development* (TICAD); China's *Forum on China-Africa Cooperation* (FOCAC); South Korea's *Korea-Africa Forum* (KOAF); or India's *India-Africa Forum Summit* (IAFS) (Iwata 2012; 2020). However, Indonesia could astutely "weaponise" the NAASP in the future through ASEAN with for example an ASEAN-Africa summit or organisation that would attempt to sideline major Asian powers and their heavy interests; to better serve Indonesia's initial intercontinental aspirations and its own interests. ASEAN can notably facilitate Indonesia's links with the AU and African Regional Economic Communities (RECs).<sup>13</sup> However, ASEAN-Africa relations have been weak or almost inexistent until now; and mostly limited to trade and interactions between ASEAN's major powers - Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, and Vietnam - and Africa's major countries (Vaidyanathan 2016). No ASEAN-Africa institutional framework exists. The diplomatic architecture, flight connections, or educational exchanges between ASEAN and Africa remain modest (Dorigné-Thomson 2022). Change could occur under Indonesian leadership. As the "natural leader" of ASEAN, Indonesia will chair the multilateral organisation in 2023 (Mandasari 2021); and could position Africa as a strategic topic. As the chair of the G20 in 2022, Indonesia already invited the African Union represented by its Chair to participate in the G20 for the first time (Marsudi 2021).<sup>14</sup>

Convened at the level of a simple business forum, yet under President Jokowi's direct patronage, not at the Summit or Ministerial level like the Africa+1 Summits of other major emerging powers, the IAF is classified as ProPN (Prioritas Pembangunan Nasional); a National Development Priorities program. As a foreign policy initiative, the African expansion is directly attached to Indonesia's domestic development objectives. Simplistically describing Indonesia as an ambitious, almost ruthless, emerging power, hungry for material benefits in Africa, would be insufficient and miss the complexity of the polity. As described in an English School perspective for example, East Asian or Southeast Asian developmental states like Indonesia subjugate economic development, including through the opening of foreign markets, to the higher and non-negotiable *raison d'État* relating to sovereignty, stability, regime, and holistic security or domestic political legitimacy (Buzan and Zhang 2014; Rolland 2021).

Jokowi and Kemlu's economic diplomacy foreign policy discourse and apparently overwhelming focus also in practice can be seen as the expansion of the sovereign developmental Indonesian state in its various dimensions that include the rise of its international status and material power, progress-signalling to its domestic audience thanks to economic gains and development, or the defence of its territorial integrity against separatism

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<sup>13</sup> The IAF is not recognized by or coordinated with the AU; as opposed to the Summits or Forums of other major external powers in Africa like China, India, Japan, or Turkey.

<sup>14</sup> The case for inviting the AU to form a G21 had been previously made notably by Jeffrey Sachs (Sachs 2021).

in relation to the West Papua issue for example;<sup>15</sup> or religious and ethnic threats (Suryadinata 1996). As a complex emerging power, Indonesia engages with Africa for multiple reasons; not only for material benefits despite the economic diplomacy narrative. Indonesia's new African venture helps to support and legitimise Jokowi's national programs especially infrastructure development, which has been his main visible target during his presidency. Roads, ports, bridges, dams, and the new Indonesian capital city form Jokowi's political legacy. Africa allows the spread of the Indonesian developmental or infrastructural model, or *savoir-faire*, highlighting in reverberation Indonesian achievements.<sup>16</sup> In reality, Jokowi is just following a developmental model initiated by Japan corresponding to the nature of his state and region.

Indonesia's new African developmental approach does not appear in a vacuum. Other emerging powers have influenced Indonesia's approach on top of which China. The Chinese presence and visible success in Africa have impacted Indonesia's own effort. "Indonesia in Africa" cannot be detached from "China in Africa" like Indonesia's domestic infrastructure building also relates to China's own domestic developmental model.<sup>17</sup> Indonesia's new African expansion framework, aiming at echoing in positive manners domestically in Indonesia and reinforcing the Indonesian developmental paradigm, unites foreign and domestic influences through knowledge and ideational hybridisation, mimicry, and transnational circulation (Hoffmann 2021). The IAF clearly follows other major powers with their Africa+1 forums. This type of forum embodies by itself a sort of diplomatic, status, and developmental achievement or marker. The Task Force headed by LBP implements an operational scheme with a Chinese developmental and "China in Africa" touch and inspiration as seen with the hunting for infrastructure and construction projects for SOEs, and the attempt to mobilise the Indonesian EXIM Bank to offer financing in support of some of those projects.<sup>18</sup> Flagship or trophy endeavours are favoured for Indonesia to be perceived in Africa as a credible, attractive, and competitive alternative player able to deliver quality projects while still benefiting from its historical legitimacy. Indonesia's relatively low financial capacities for foreign projection and investment in comparison to other major external powers in Africa encourages, to compensate, a discourse of sharing development advice and experience with Africans notably in infrastructure and connectivity (Biro Komunikasi 2019; Rachman 2019). As for domestic influences, the entrepreneurial spirit and political genius of Jokowi associated with LBP's

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<sup>15</sup> For example, the West Papua topic was the first evoked in an interview in September 2020 with the Indonesian Ambassador in Tunisia (2016-2021) Prof. Ikrar Nusa Bhakti. Not really a concern in North Africa, it was a problem in Senegal for example but has been handled well according to the Ambassador by the Indonesian Embassy in Dakar. Prof. Ikrar said it was emerging as a problem in South Africa with activists organizing coffee shop meetings and other propaganda for the Free Papua movement. For decades already, Indonesian ambassadors in Africa, as well as Indonesian intelligence, specially monitor and try to counter Papua separatism instrumentalized through "Black solidarity" or Pan-Africanism (Deplu and UNDIP 1984; Wilson 2016; MC 2019; Kluge 2019). Kemlu officially minimizes the threat coming from Africa. Interviews with Dr. Teuku Faizasyah, Spokesperson and Director General of Information and Public Diplomacy, Kemlu, 17 and 29 September 2021, online, Jakarta. Yet the issue remains an "irritant" for Indonesia (Weatherbee 2016). Minister Retno herself was considered successful in countering Papua separatism as Ambassador to the Netherlands (Redaksi 2014).

<sup>16</sup> Supporting African development can also appear, like for China, as a way to contribute to global public goods (Large 2021).

<sup>17</sup> China itself having learned from Japan.

<sup>18</sup> This state-led initiative appears complementary to a more private sector "diplomasi Indomie" referring to an effort to replicate the Indonesian MNC Indofood's (Salim group) instant noodle brand Indomie's success in Africa notably in Nigeria or Ghana (Ramadhani and Sari 2020; Hasan 2016). Indonesian MNCs like the Salim Group or Sinar Mas have their own networks in Africa and have preceded the Indonesian state's effort in Africa through its SOEs. The state is useful for MNCs to open markets for exports through trade negotiations for example (Al-Fadhat 2019).

military legitimacy and tremendous power mobilisation capacity create a pragmatic developmental ideational psyche authorizing the new vision of the African continent as an internationalization laboratory for Indonesia.

Jokowi's domestic popularity also facilitates foreign policy endeavours (Trubowitz and Harris 2019). Domestic politics has always conditioned foreign policy leeway for Indonesian leaders (Sukma 2003). In general, many Jokowi achievements were actually conceptualised during the Yudhoyono presidency and figure in the *Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Panjang Nasional* 2005-2025 (RPJPN 2005-2025).<sup>19</sup> It is not the case with the new African multi-bilateral and more concrete framework which carries an obvious Jokowi watermark.<sup>20</sup> As a statesman, Jokowi has been able to better deliver compared to his predecessors and many other democratic leaders around the world thanks to his strong simplification and socialisation capacities towards his people; making him a unique contemporary international political figure. His association with such a senior military figure as LBP has permitted the stabilisation of his power and thus his capacity to reach his developmental objectives; the new African policy being part of that. An enterprising figure, Jokowi contradicts Leifer's assertion of a gap between Indonesia's declared ambitions and its actual Southeast Asian attainments with this African example; although the endeavour remains modest for the moment (Leifer 1983). Indonesia cannot be limited to being described as constantly inward-looking and afraid of big powers (Weinstein 1976),<sup>21</sup> burdened by domestic issues threatening state authority; or only concentrated on the ASEAN concentric circle as the so-called "cornerstone" of its foreign policy (D. F. Anwar 2017; 2020).

The new African approach highlights the probable conceptual inadequacy of classifying Indonesia as a so-called middle power willing to be a good global citizen acknowledged by the liberal world or stay modestly in the shadows while dealing with its domestic problems; and reveals Indonesia's sophistication, true ambitions, and determination to expand globally with its own style and timing as an important emerging power aiming to become a great global power. With a geopolitical enlargement to the Indo-Pacific (Shekhar 2018), Indonesia's foreign policy reboot under Jokowi is exemplified with Indonesia's new and more pragmatic African policy. The African effort can be appraised as a breakthrough in the sense that it appears as the first Indonesian coordinated state attempt to expand to another region. Gaining great power status goes through Africa for Indonesia.<sup>22</sup> The question of political continuity with leadership change cannot however be avoided with the 2024 Indonesian presidential elections coming up. Other countries like Australia or Brazil have shown that a presidential change can annihilate an ambitious African foreign policy engagement (Pijović 2019; Stolte 2015; Alencastro and Seabra 2021).

Until recently, thorough studies about "Indonesia in Africa" have been scant (Dorigné-Thomson 2021; 2022). Indonesia's late contemporary African engagement as well as its still

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<sup>19</sup> RPJPN: National Long-Term Development Plan (Bappenas 2005).

<sup>20</sup> Indonesia's geopolitical narratives of Global Maritime Fulcrum and Indo-Pacific outlook bring Africa into Indonesia's elite mental map through Eastern Africa as the Western bank of the Indian Ocean (Suropati, Montratama, and Sulaiman 2018; Pattiradjawane and Soebago 2015).

<sup>21</sup> Oligarchic theories also consider Indonesia remains inward-looking. Indonesian so-called oligarchs reject "the capture of foreign markets or resources or to influence the policies of other nations." They defend their domestic rent-seeking projects (Robison and Hadiz 2017). The African expansion contradicts oligarchic theory in its assessment of Indonesia's supposedly inward-looking character.

<sup>22</sup> For Pardesi, great power is attained by gaining great power status, as recognized by other powers, in at least one external region; on top of the region of origin (Pardesi 2015). In that perspective, Africa appears indeed very strategic for Indonesia.

limited depth today, despite the progress made, are correlated to the lack of capacity and knowledge of Africa in Indonesia (Dorigné-Thomson 2022).<sup>23</sup> More widely, Indonesia's still deficient education system limits its knowledge production and its quality (Guggenheim 2012; Sukma 2011); hurting its foreign policy relevance and impact. As explicated with the Africa case, diplomatic budgets are insufficient;<sup>24</sup> like the financial means of universities. External powers in Africa like China, Turkey or India are massively investing in their knowledge capacities and networks towards the continent. Competition takes place first and foremost in the ideational and educational domains. Like it was able to create concerning ASEAN or the law of the sea, Indonesia needs to develop epistemic communities on Africa and Afro-Asia to raise the level of its game. Indonesian decision-makers as well as the general public need quality information and understanding of Africa and related issues. It determines Indonesia's future.

## CONCLUSION

The Bandung Asia-Africa Conference was notably born from an Asian frustration due to a lack of Western consideration for Asian positions and a refusal of a kind of Asian NATO. Following the Asian financial crisis, the NAASP showcased ASEAN's return; Indonesia's new democratic and economic credentials; as well as Africa's will to learn from Asian successes, and South Africa's emerging power ambitions. With the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the US and China's assertiveness and systemic rivalry, AUKUS and QUAD minilaterals, competing narratives relating to the Indo-Pacific construction or autocracies versus democracies, Africa can offer potential geopolitical leverage or an alternative for non-aligned Indonesia; on top of being Indonesia's road to great power status.

There again, Indonesia needs to boost, holistically, its knowledge and material capacities; finding the right approach to an increasingly crowded continent with its own agency and Pan-African dreams; not trying to go "beyond Bandung" (Marsudi 2017); but simply fulfill Bandung expectations, which will mean going beyond the IAF and being more creative. Indonesia's foreign policy towards non-regional areas like Africa will continue to be determined by the state of its domestic politics, the leadership of the day; and thus the increasing capacity and ambition of the developmental state and the mindset of the elites leading it. A more "intellectual" leadership after the "infrastructural" Jokowi era could support a denser and more qualitative foreign policy; while preserving Jokowi's capacity to deliver concrete results that leave no doubt a substantial legacy; both in terms of hardware but also in terms of assertiveness and pride.

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<sup>23</sup> Author's interview with Former Indonesian Foreign Minister Dr. Hassan Wirajuda, 17 April 2018, Jakarta, Pusdiklat Kementerian Luar Negeri Indonesia.

<sup>24</sup> The budget of the Africa Directorate was \$127,000 in 2021 targeting \$314,000 in 2024 (IDR 14,314 for \$1). Given the organization of Africa+1 forums in 2022, the budget was raised to \$1,480,000 for that year (Kemlu 2020). Indonesia has only 18 embassies in Africa; adding the planned ones in Cameroon and Ghana (Dorigné-Thomson 2022).

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