



## SPECIAL ISSUE ARTICLE

# Indonesia's Global Maritime Fulcrum Vision and Regional Security in Indo-Pacific

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## ABSTRACT

The Indo-Pacific is a strategic area and a stage for competition among major powers. The region's vast potential, connecting two oceans and continents, serves as a highly strategic maritime trade route. This article aims to analyse the extent to which Indonesia's maritime diplomacy contributes to maintaining security in the Indo-Pacific region. The research adopted a qualitative method with an analytical-descriptive approach. Data collection techniques involved literature studies, while data analysis techniques included data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The theoretical framework employed consisted of maritime diplomacy and middle power concepts. The research argues that Indonesia, as a middle power, has utilized the Global Maritime Fulcrum vision as a persuasive diplomatic tool to enhance its influence and contribute to maintaining security in the region. However, the Global Maritime Fulcrum as a model of persuasive maritime diplomacy has been gradually abandoned, shifting towards cooperative maritime diplomacy. Indonesia adopted a more cooperative approach in responding to issues and security dynamics in the region.

## KEYWORDS

Global Maritime Fulcrum; Indo-Pacific;  
Maritime Diplomacy; Middle Power;  
Security

## INTRODUCTION

The term Indo-Pacific has existed since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is a biogeographical concept that describes a region encompassing the waters of the Indian Ocean, the Western Pacific Ocean, the Central Pacific Ocean, and the South China Sea ([Yadav, 2022](#)). The term “Indo-Pacific” became more popular and widely used, particularly in the context of international relations, after it was first introduced by former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2007. In the context of international relations, the Indo-Pacific concept has come to be understood as a framework for regional cooperation or as a grand strategy in the fields of trade, economics, politics, and military affairs for countries situated in the tropical waters of the Indian and Pacific Oceans ([Yadav, 2022](#)).

In the context of international relations, the Indo-Pacific region has experienced significant development in recent years due to increasing strategic value. This region serves as a vital connection for international trade networks, contributing 68.63% of global GDP and encompassing 68.28% of the world’s population ([Indian Council of World Affairs, 2022](#)). These figures underscore the growing strategic importance of the region. With abundant resources and a well-established global supply chain, the Indo-Pacific has driven economic growth and development, further enhanced its strategic position and attracted the attention of major powers.

As a global trade route, the Indo-Pacific holds immense strategic significance. This has prompted major powers such as the United States, China, Russia, and the European Union to engage in the region. Their involvement has intensified conflictual relations, particularly between the United States and China. These two major powers are entangled in a complex rivalry as they compete for influence and dominance in the Indo-Pacific region.

The presence of the United States and China in the Indo-Pacific region has created security challenges for the region. These two nations have transformed the Indo-Pacific into a battleground for superpower competition, potentially undermining the region’s security and stability. Their power struggle risks dividing the countries in the region, forcing them to align with one side or the other. For instance, China introduced the *One Belt One Road Initiative*, now known as the Belt Road Initiative (BRI), which was met with a response from the United States through the declaration of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP). The rivalry between the United States and China presents the opportunities and challenges for the region. Economically, it could benefit countries within the Indo-Pacific. However, at the same time, it poses significant risks to regional stability and security.

Indonesia must respond to the dynamics in the Indo-Pacific region, particularly the rivalry between the United States and China. Indonesia holds a strategic position in the Indo-Pacific, situated at the epicentre of the region. Geographically, Indonesia serves as a vital connector between two major powers in the Indo-Pacific. Indonesia is strategically important in the Indo-Pacific as well. The Sunda Strait, Lombok Strait, and Makassar Straits are critical global shipping lanes that connect to the South China Sea ([Choiruzzad, 2015](#)). Robert D. Kaplan highlights the importance of these waterways, noting that over 50% of

international trade fleets pass through the ([Kaplan, 2011](#)). This strategic position also presents vulnerabilities for Indonesia, especially if the United States-China's rivalry in the region escalates into threats to stability and security in the Indo-Pacific.

Indonesia is confronted with a dynamic and uncertain reality in the region. Therefore, it is imperative for Indonesia to respond to these dynamics and actively promote the Indo-Pacific as a peaceful region. As a middle power and nation in the region, Indonesia does not aspire for the Indo-Pacific to become an arena for great power rivalries, as such tensions could potentially harm the countries within the region, including Indonesia.

In addressing these regional dynamics, Indonesia undertakes various efforts to overcome these challenges through diplomatic initiatives. One of the key diplomatic strategies pursued by Indonesia is maritime diplomacy. Maritime diplomacy has become a cornerstone of Indonesia's political agenda since President Joko Widodo declared his vision of establishing Indonesia as the Global Maritime Fulcrum ([Sekretariat Kabinet Republik Indonesia, 2014](#)). Through maritime diplomacy, Indonesia aims to safeguard peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

Based on this background, this article aims to analyse the extent to which Indonesia's maritime diplomacy can contribute to the security and stability on the Indo-Pacific regions. This region has increasingly become an arena of rivalry among major global powers, particularly the United States and China. With this in mind, the research argues that Indonesia, as a middle power, has used the Global Maritime Fulcrum vision as a persuasive diplomatic tool to enhance its influence and contribute to maintaining security in the region. But this vision has shifted from a persuasive diplomatic tool to cooperative maritime diplomacy as a response to the security dynamics in the region.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Maritime Diplomacy**

Diplomacy is a form of managing international relations. Therefore, maritime diplomacy is a form of managing international relations within a maritime context. Maritime diplomacy aims to address threats to maritime security. According to Christian Le Miere, maritime diplomacy can be categorized into three forms: cooperative maritime diplomacy, persuasive maritime diplomacy, and coercive maritime diplomacy ([Le Miere, 2014](#)).

Cooperative maritime diplomacy is inherently cooperative. It does not aim to intimidate, obstruct, or coerce. Instead, maritime diplomacy is designed to build coalitions, support allies in capacity building, training, and harmonizing techniques, as well as fostering trust among nations concerned about the strength of their naval force ([Le Miere, 2014](#)). Cooperative maritime diplomacy does not utilize naval ships to exert violence against others: rather, naval ships are employed for peaceful activities ([Le Miere, 2014](#)).

Cooperative maritime diplomacy can be closely likened to the theory of soft power, which seeks to make others desire outcomes we aim for without relying on coercion as the

primary tool of diplomacy. This approach strives to shift a nation's behaviour from competitive interactions with other countries towards a tendency to collaborate with them.

Second is persuasive maritime diplomacy. It differs from cooperative maritime diplomacy due to its diplomatic impact in its activities. It also contrasts with coercive maritime diplomacy, as it does not aim to deter other countries ([Le Miere, 2014](#)). The objective of persuasive maritime diplomacy is to enhance recognition of maritime power and establish the nation's authority on international politics ([Le Miere, 2014](#)). Persuasive maritime diplomacy is used to demonstrate a nation's capabilities without resorting to aggression or influencing the policies of other countries.

Lastly, there is coercive maritime diplomacy. Coercive maritime diplomacy is a form of maritime diplomacy that involves the threat or use of naval power to compel an adversary to retreat or to serve as a deterrent in achieving political objectives. Coercive maritime diplomacy places greater emphasis on demonstrating the use of threats to safeguard national interests or to prevent potential loss.

Indonesia positions maritime diplomacy as one of the pillars of its maritime policy. The Indonesian government defines maritime diplomacy as the implementation of foreign policy aimed at optimizing maritime potential to fulfil national interests in accordance with national regulations and international law ([Perpres No. 16 Tahun 2017 Tentang Kebijakan Kelautan Indonesia, 2017](#)). This foreign policy implementation not only encompasses maritime aspects at bilateral, regional, and global levels, but also involves utilizing maritime assets, both civilian and military, to achieve national interests in compliance with national and international legal provision ([Perpres No. 16 Tahun 2017 Tentang Kebijakan Kelautan Indonesia, 2017](#)).

### **Middle Power**

Middle power countries are generally defined as states that are neither large or small in terms of strength, capacity, influence, and ability to create cohesion and constraints on global governance ([Jordaan, 2003](#)). According to Carr, as cited in Karim, there are three main approaches to middle power classification: position, behavioural, and identity-based approaches ([Karim, 2018](#)).

The positional approach, also known as the hierarchical approach, explains middle power by emphasizing the importance of a country's capacity and geopolitical position within the international system ([Chapnick, 1999](#)). This approach is rooted in the realist perspective, focusing on material capabilities to conceptualize middle powers. Middle powers are identified quantitatively by assessing metrics such as gross domestic products, population, military expenditure, and the other factors ([Karim, 2018](#)). The positional approach offers useful analytical precision in defining middle powers. It enables the term to serve as more than a mere classification tool for states. However, as Ravenhill cited in Karim notes, this approach cannot explain the behaviour of countries categorized as middle

powers. It falls short of clarifying why not all middle powers are willing to take on greater roles in the international order ([Karim, 2018](#)).

Second, it is a behavioural approach. The behavioural approach focuses on foreign policy behaviour and diplomacy rather than relying solely on structural definitions tied to material capabilities. While material strength is necessary, middle powers are not solely defined by material capacity. Middle powers are also shaped by their behaviour, as reflected in their foreign policy towards the international order ([Karim, 2018](#)). This approach places greater emphasis on normative foundations and morality, which drive middle powers to pursue larger roles and contribute to the international system. However, the behavioural approach has been criticized for being biased towards traditional middle powers, such as Australia, Canada, and Nordic Countries. It tends to overlook the diverse motivations among middle powers, reducing their behaviour to being uniformly driven by shared normative goals and downplaying the role of domestic agendas in influencing state behaviour ([Karim, 2018](#)).

Lastly, there is the identity approach. The rise of constructivist paradigms has encouraged scholars of International Relations to consider the possibility of treating middle power as a “constructed identity.” Constructivism can explain middle power behaviour by examining the extent to which the idea of middle power has been internalized by decision-makers ([Karim, 2018](#)). The identity approach focuses on conceptualizing middle power identity through the ideas of constitutive norms, social goal, relations comparisons, and cognitive models. However, the identity approach is not without its limitations, as identity is relatively fixed and static. Middle power should not be viewed as the state's identity, as state identity is typically a semi-permanent feature rooted in the existing social, political, and historical beliefs of society.

To better understand the concept of middle power, role theory can be employed as a framework for deeper insight. To comprehend the middle power concept through role theory, it is essential to distinguish conceptually between middle power as a status and middle power as a role. Role theory has been widely used in International Relations and was introduced by K.J. Holsti in the 1970s to analyse the foreign policy behaviour of states within the international system. According to Karim, one of the foundational concepts in role theory introduced by Holsti is the notion of national role conception ([Karim, 2018](#)).

Generally, middle power is often viewed as a status. However, some perspectives regard middle power as a role. Roles typically associated with middle power include peacekeeper, mediator, and communicator. Meanwhile, Cooper, Higgot, and Nosal as cited in Karim, conceptualize middle power roles as those of a catalyst, facilitator, and manager ([Karim, 2018](#)).

The status of a middle power requires not only expectations of other states but also the self-identification of the country itself, as this self-identification imbues the status with a sense of pride. A self-identification as a middle power is crucial because the status of a middle power does not come with specific rights or obligations. Meanwhile, the role of a

middle power is more dynamic, as roles are not only shaped by differing expectations but also emerge through interactions with other states ([Karim, 2018](#)). Although middle power behaviour can be identified, such behaviour does not always reflect the actions of a state. Based on the middle power theory, Indonesia can be categorized as a middle power. Indonesia's maritime diplomacy efforts in responding to the dynamics in the Indo-Pacific region are closely linked to its status and role as a middle power in the region.

## **METHODS**

The research utilizes a qualitative method, which is often applied to explore and understand meaning from social or human issues ([Checkell, 2008](#)). This approach was descriptive-analytical in nature. Descriptive-analytical research focuses on describing specific social phenomena and subsequently analysing them to identify relationships between variables.

The data collection technique was conducted through a literature review to provide robust support for the research. The literature sources included scholarly journals, books, working papers, government reports, and other valid references. The data analysis technique employed a qualitative approach. According to Moleong, data analysis involves simplifying and organizing data into a format that is easy to read and interpret ([Moleong, 2014](#)). This process was used to answer the research questions. According to Miles and Huberman as cited in Silalahi, the analysis process encompassed three simultaneous activities: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions ([Silalahi, 2012](#)).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Security Dynamics in the Indo-Pacific Region**

The Indo-Pacific region is known as an economic hub and a driving force of the global economy. This region hosts critical maritime routes, including international trade passages through the Indian Ocean, Sunda Strait, Lombok Strait, Malacca Strait, and the South China Sea. The Indo-Pacific boasts 9 out of the 10 busiest seaports in the world ([Anh Tuan, 2020](#)). Robert D. Kaplan notes that over 50% of global merchant fleet tonnage, or one-third of total maritime traffic, passes through these waters, particularly the South China Sea ([Kaplan, 2011](#)). Additionally, the Indo-Pacific region is home to the highest biodiversity levels in the world. It harbours approximately one-third of the world's shallow marine fish species, with around 3.000 species compared to other regions that house no more than 1.200 species ([Anh Tuan, 2020](#)). The South China Sea, one of the key maritime areas in the region, is estimated to hold oil reserves of 7 billion barrels and natural gas reserves of approximately 900 cubic feet ([Kaplan, 2011](#)).

The Indo-Pacific region holds significant strategic value but faces complex maritime security challenges. Ahn Tuan notes that the Indo-Pacific region encompasses approximately 40 disputes related to maritime territories among the countries within the area, including disputes over territorial waters and sovereign rights over maritime zones

([Anh Tuan, 2020](#)). Examples include the South China Sea disputes, the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands disputes, and the China- Taiwan Disputes.

Other major maritime security challenges are piracy and armed robbery. The South China Sea and the Indian Ocean rank among the most perilous waters in the world. In 2018, there were 57 and 25 incidents of piracy and armed robbery reported in these waters. These figures are second only to the waters off West Africa, which recorded 81 cases ([Anh Tuan, 2020](#)). Additionally, maritime terrorism poses a growing threat, with the spread of terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and Anu Sayyaf in the Indo-Pacific region.

Beyond these security challenges, the Indo-pacific region is also witnessing the emergence of the new maritime threats that affect coastal communities. These include rising sea levels, an increase in the frequency and severity of natural disasters, growing volume of marine debris, and the degradation of marine biodiversity ([Anh Tuan, 2020](#)).

The strategic importance of the Indo-Pacific region has grown significantly with the involvement of major powers in recent years. Countries, such as the United States, China, Japan, Australia, Russia, India, and European Union, have become actively engaged in the dynamics of the Indo-Pacific. Each nation has proposed strategies to enhance connectivity in the region, aligning with their respective interests. China, for instance, initiated *the One Belt, One Road Initiative*, which has evolved into the *Belt and Road Initiative*, placing maritime regions as a top priority. This initiative aims to establish a 21<sup>st</sup>-century Maritime Silk Road connecting seaports between China and Europe ([Anh Tuan, 2020](#)).

On the other hand, the United States, recognizing the critical importance of maritime routes in the Indo-Pacific, has promoted the concept of a *Free and Open Indo-Pacific*. The initiative seeks to encourage connectivity in the region, focusing on economic cooperation, governance, and security ([Anh Tuan, 2020](#)). In addition to China and the United States, other nations have also outlined their perspectives on connectivity in the Indo-Pacific. The European Union (EU), for example, has proposed the strategy of *Connecting Europe and Asia* to enhance connectivity between the regions. This initiative is vital for the EU, as 70% of the trade value between Europe and Asia is conducted via maritime routes ([Anh Tuan, 2020](#)).

The involvement of major powers in the Indo-Pacific region, as well as the rivalry between China and the United States represent the prevailing political reality in the region. While this situation may bring certain advantages, it also poses significant challenges. The rivalry among major powers, each striving to advance their national interests, fosters conflictual relationships and has the potential to turn the Indo-Pacific into a battleground for these nations. If such a scenario unfolds, it would undermine the peaceful and stable environment of the Indo-Pacific region. These conflictual dynamics could also divide countries in the region, compelling them to align with one of the major powers, thereby jeopardizing the peace and security of the Indo-Pacific.

These conditions have created opportunities to enhance maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region. The increasing strategic value of the region has raised awareness of the importance of maritime areas within the Indo-Pacific. Countries in the region are paying

greater attention to maritime issues, which are vulnerable to both traditional and non-traditional security threats. These include territorial disputes, piracy, armed robbery, illegal fishing, marine debris pollution, and other emerging threats to the region's seas and oceans.

### **Indonesia as a Middle Power: The Vision of a Global Maritime Fulcrum**

The increasingly Indo-Pacific dynamic, coupled with its potential security threats, cannot be ignored by Indonesia. Indonesia has a vested interest in the stability and security of the Indo-Pacific region, as it lies at the heart of the Indo-Pacific's epicentre. Indonesia is a bridge between two continents, Asia and Oceania. Indonesia's maritime territory is a highly strategic international trade route. Therefore, the challenges and obstacles present in the Indo-Pacific must be addressed proactively by Indonesia.

Indonesia's perspective on the increasing significance of the Indo-Pacific region was articulated in President Joko Widodo's address at the 9<sup>th</sup> East Asia Summit in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar in 2014. President Joko Widodo emphasized Indonesia's recognition of a significant transformation underway, marked by a shift in the geo-economic and geo-political centre of gravity from the west to East Asia ([Sekretariat Kabinet Republik Indonesia, 2014](#)). In response to these situations, Mr. President introduced the concept of Indonesia as a *Global Maritime Fulcrum*. He underscored the necessity for Indonesia to assert itself as a Global Maritime Fulcrum, a pivotal power situated between two oceans- the Indian and the Pacific ([Sekretariat Kabinet Republik Indonesia, 2014](#)).

President Joko Widodo further stressed that as a Global Maritime Fulcrum, Indonesia has a vested interest in shaping the future of the Pacific and Indian Oceans ([Sekretariat Kabinet Republik Indonesia, 2014](#)). He highlighted the importance of maintaining peace and security in these oceans for global trade. This vision includes strengthening maritime cooperation in the region, supporting maritime connectivity and infrastructure, and actively contributing to maritime security in the Indo-Pacific ([Sekretariat Kabinet Republik Indonesia, 2014](#)).

The vision of the Global Maritime Fulcrum, introduced by President Joko Widodo in 2014, was institutionalized in 2017 through the issuance of Presidential Regulation No. 16 of 2017 on Indonesia's Maritime Policy. This regulation explicitly states that the Global Maritime Fulcrum is Indonesia's vision to become a sovereign, independent, and robust maritime nation capable of making positive contribution to regional and global security and peace in line with national interests ([Perpres No. 16 Tahun 2017 Tentang Kebijakan Kelautan Indonesia, 2017](#)). The regulation also emphasizes that the vision of the Global Maritime Fulcrum must comprehensively consider the constellation of inter-state relations in Asia, as well as various regional initiatives, such as the ASEAN community, China's *One Belt One Road initiative*, India's *Act East* policy, and the United States *rebalance* strategy. The Global Maritime Fulcrum aims to synergy with these initiatives where they align with national interests, fostering peace and contributing positively to regional and global stability ([Perpres No. 16 Tahun 2017 Tentang Kebijakan Kelautan Indonesia, 2017](#)).



The vision of the Global Maritime Fulcrum can be realized through five pillars. These five pillars are: 1) *rebuilding maritime culture*, emphasizing that the Indonesian people must recognize themselves as a maritime nation whose identity is defined by how they manage oceans; 2) *marine resources*, focusing on achieving maritime sovereignty, where maritime wealth is utilized to maximize benefits for the people; 3) *development of maritime infrastructure and connectivity* to enhance economic and logistical integrations; 4) *strengthening maritime defence capabilities* to safeguard sovereignty, maritime wealth, and ensure maritime safety and security; 5) *maritime diplomacy*, fostering cooperation in maritime affairs, while addressing sources of conflict at sea, such as illegal fishing, sovereignty violations, territorial disputes, piracy, and marine pollution ([Sekretariat Kabinet Republik Indonesia, 2014](#)).

Maritime diplomacy serves as a crucial pillar in realizing the vision of the Global Maritime Fulcrum. Maritime diplomacy is defined as the implementation of Indonesia's foreign policy with four objectives: 1) to protect Indonesia's sovereignty over its maritime territories and its rights over the exclusive economic zone, continental shelf, and extended continental shelf. Safeguarding the marine environment is top priority of maritime diplomacy; 2) to ensure the welfare of the Indonesian people and enhance connectivity between Indonesia's region; 3) to uphold stability based on international legal frameworks and demonstrate leadership in addressing global maritime issues; 4) to strengthen national capacity to achieve the objectives outlined in Indonesia's maritime policy, including enhancing the provision of technical assistance to regional partners on maritime issues ([Buku Putih Diplomasi Maritim, 2019](#)).

Indonesia, as a middle power in the Indo-Pacific, utilizes the Global Maritime Fulcrum as a strategic diplomatic tool to strengthen its position in the region and respond to two major initiatives: Belt Road Initiative and Free and Open Indo-Pacific. As a middle power, Indonesia employs the Global Maritime Fulcrum as a strategy to derive benefits from both initiatives while maintaining its autonomy in foreign policy ([Pratiwi et al., 2021](#)).

As a middle power, Indonesia also faces limitations in confronting military and economic strength compared to major powers competing for influence in the region. This condition compels Indonesia to adopt a more cautious and measured approach. The Global Maritime Fulcrum serves as a crucial instrument for Indonesia to establish cooperation with various countries without relying on a military force. Through maritime diplomacy, Indonesia strengthens its position in multilateral dialogues and creates communication channels to bridge the interests of major and developing countries in the region.

Indonesia, through the Global Maritime Fulcrum, wisely avoids direct confrontation with major powers on sensitive issues like the South China Sea. Instead, Indonesia focuses on its role as a mediator and facilitator in seeking peaceful resolution through multilateral forums such as ASEAN. This demonstrates Indonesia's commitment as a middle power to maintaining regional stability without becoming entangled in the tensions arising from major power rivalries in the region.

The vision of the Global Maritime Fulcrum reflects the stance and response of the Indonesian government as a middle power in addressing the dynamics of the Indo-Pacific region. Indonesia responds firmly to potential security threats in the region through this vision. Maritime diplomacy and the vision of the Global Maritime Fulcrum illustrate Indonesia's consistency in playing an active role in maintaining stability and peace in the Indo-Pacific region.

### **Global Maritime Fulcrum Contribution to Regional Security**

The Global Maritime Fulcrum has made a significant contribution to Indonesia's efforts in maintaining security and stability in the Indo-Pacific. Indonesia's vision for the Global Maritime Fulcrum has led to enhanced naval capabilities, enabling effective patrols in Indonesian waters and areas prone to criminal activities such as piracy. Indonesia's commitment to continuously strengthening its maritime defence capacity has indirectly had a positive impact on maritime security in the region.

In addition to enhancing its maritime defence capacity, Indonesia actively participates in security cooperation. Indonesia is involved in the formulation of the Code of Conduct as an effort to prevent maritime conflicts between China and ASEAN member states ([Hutomo et al., 2023](#)). Indonesia has also strengthened multilateral security frameworks, such as the Indian Ocean Rim Association, to ensure regional maritime safety. Moreover, Indonesia has promoted the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, emphasizing ASEAN's centrality in managing geopolitical tensions ([Burhani, 2023](#)). Indonesia has also underscored the importance of adhering to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) 1982 as the legal basis for resolving maritime disputes. UNCLOS serves as Indonesia's primary diplomatic instrument in addressing China territorial claims in the South China Sea ([Hutomo et al., 2023](#)).

Indonesia's contribution to the Indo-Pacific region through the Global Maritime Fulcrum policy is highly significant in maintaining security stability and strengthening regional cooperation. With its strategic geographical position and inclusive diplomatic approach, Indonesia has successfully assumed the role of a regional leader and a balancing power amid increasingly complex geopolitical rivalries.

### **From Persuasive to Cooperative Maritime Diplomacy**

Indonesia, a middle power situated at the epicentre of the Indo-Pacific region, responds to regional challenges and threats by launching the vision of the Global Maritime Fulcrum. This vision articulates Indonesia's aspiration to actively contribute to maintaining stability and peace in the Indo-Pacific. Indonesia recognizes that, as a middle power, it faces inherent limitations that cannot be overlooked. This is evident in Indonesia's foreign policy stance, which consistently pays close attention to initiatives emerging in the Indo-Pacific region.

The vision of the Global Maritime Fulcrum embodies the concept of a middle power serving as a guardian of peace. The vision reflects Indonesia's efforts to position itself as a

significant nation within the region. The Global Maritime Fulcrum, as Indonesia's maritime diplomacy vision, represents a form of persuasive maritime diplomacy. It is a strategy employed by Indonesia to enhance international recognition and establish its prestige in the region.

Indonesia's response to addressing security threats in the Indo-Pacific region has been the use of persuasive maritime diplomacy. The objective of persuasive maritime diplomacy is to enhance recognition of maritime power and establish the nation's authority on international politics ([Le Miere, 2014](#)). Through this approach, Indonesia seeks to maintain its presence and continue gaining attention in the region. Indonesia's persuasive actions are demonstrated by its "aggressive" and consistent effort to combat illegal fishing in its waters. Over five years, Minister Susi Pudjiastuti succeeded in sinking 588 vessels ([Purba, 2019](#)). Indonesia has chosen to sink illegal fishing vessels rather than adopting a more lenient approach.

Additionally, in addressing China's claim over the South China Sea, Indonesia decided to rename the waters as the North Natuna Sea, replacing the previous designation of the South China Sea ([Tempo.co, 2021](#)). This move underscores the Indonesian government's rejection of China's nine-dash line claim. Such action reflects Indonesia's persuasive stance in asserting its presence in the region.

However, the nature of Indonesia's persuasive maritime diplomacy is gradually shifting towards cooperative maritime diplomacy. Burhani notes that even during the first half of President Joko Widodo's administration, maritime issues began to receive less attention. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also did not prioritize maritime affairs ([Burhani, 2023](#)).

The vision of Global Maritime Fulcrum was set aside by President Joko Widodo during the second half of his administration. The Global Maritime Fulcrum no longer featured prominently, as the President shifted his focus toward human resource development, infrastructure, regulatory and bureaucratic reform, and economic transformation ([Laksmiana, 2019](#)). Nevertheless, the vision of the Global Maritime Fulcrum was not without achievement. According to Tiola, the Global Maritime Fulcrum produced tangible results in economic policy, strengthening the Navy, and foreign policy initiatives with maritime dimensions ([Tiola, 2019](#)).

This change indicates that Indonesia's maritime diplomacy has shifted from a persuasive approach to a cooperative maritime diplomacy. Cooperative maritime diplomacy does not utilize naval ships to exert violence against others: rather, naval ships are employed for peaceful activities ([Le Miere, 2014](#)). Cooperative maritime diplomacy is designed to foster collaboration with other parties.

Regarding illegal fishing, Indonesia no longer enforces the practice of sinking foreign vessels. Instead, Indonesia has adopted a more subtle approach by repurposing these illegal vessels for the benefit of traditional Indonesian fishermen ([KKP, 2024](#)). Additionally, the sinking of vessels had previously faced protests from countries in the region, particularly in

Southeast Asia, as it could potentially strain diplomatic relations. Indonesia's cooperative attitude can also be seen in an approach that strengthens multilateral cooperation. This is reflected, for instance, in Indonesia's involvement in the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) to ensure security and safety in the Indian ocean. Additionally, within ASEAN, Indonesia has played a pivotal role in advocating for the adoption of the *ASEAN outlook on the Indo-Pacific* (AOIP), emphasizing ASEAN's role as a key actor in maintaining regional security amidst rivalries among major powers. Indonesia continues to strengthen ASEAN Connectivity and actively participates in bilateral and multilateral negotiations to uphold security in the Indo-Pacific region.

## CONCLUSIONS

The Indo-Pacific region holds significant strategic value. Its economic potential, particularly as an international maritime trade route, and its vast biodiversity are key factors that enhance the region's strategic importance. This strategic value has also given rise to various threats to the region. Both traditional and non-traditional security threats are escalating and pose risks to the Indo-Pacific. Furthermore, the region's strategic significance attracts the presence of major powers. The rivalry between China and the United States reflects the threats and tensions faced in this region.

Indonesia, as one of the countries in the region and located at its epicentre, has a vested interest in ensuring peace and stability within the area. As a middle power, Indonesia strives to actively contribute to regional peace. One of its responses to maintaining stability is the initiative of the Global Maritime Fulcrum vision. This vision serves as the foundation of Indonesia's maritime diplomacy, characterized by a persuasive approach aimed at enhancing the nation's influence and stature on the international order.

However, this doctrine has gradually been set aside, with Indonesia adopting a more cooperative stance in responding to the dynamics of the Indo-Pacific region. Despite this shift, Indonesia's role in maintaining regional stability remains strategic. Its more cooperative approach enables Indonesia to be more dynamic and align its interests with major powers that seek greater connectivity with the Indo-Pacific region.

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