

# Security Cooperation between China and Indonesia to Address Maritime Security Threats

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## Abstract

China and Indonesia face the same maritime challenge in Asia. As their relationship strengthens and their multidimensional strategic connection grows. This research analyzes the maritime security threats China and Indonesia, include the current state of China-Indonesia security cooperation, and proposes the following steps to strengthen security cooperation, especially jointly countering maritime security threats. It also provides policymakers with theory and practice guidance. China and Indonesia can improve security by strengthening their alliance. However, there are some trust issues and a weak security cooperation mechanism. China and Indonesia must increase security cooperation to address maritime security threats. The two countries should increase multi-level defence and military cooperation to eliminate maritime security threats.

## Keywords

Security Threats, Indonesia, China, Maritime Security, ASEAN

## 1. Introduction

The rise of Asian nations has attracted the international community's attention; China and Indonesia are regional powers. Along with historical developments, the relations between the two countries are gradually getting closer (Goh, 2008). Because the two countries' economies are overgrowing, their international influence is also growing. At the same time, they are neighbours by sea, which profoundly impact each other. Stable relations between China and Indonesia are

the basis and prerequisite for strategic development. In recent years, China-Indonesia relations have developed rapidly.

At the end of 1999, the two countries reached a consensus on building and developing long-term and stable relations, mutual trust, and comprehensive cooperation. In October 2013, China and Indonesia reached a comprehensive strategic partnership and signed the “Future Plan for the China-Indonesia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership” (Oratmangun, 2022). The relationship between the two countries has been upgraded from a strategic partnership to a comprehensive strategic partnership, and the relations between the two countries are further improved. The President of the Republic of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, paid a state visit to China from March 25 to 28, 2015 jointly issued a “Joint Statement on Strengthening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the Two Countries” (Fitriani, 2021).

In the statement above, the two governments also stated a high degree of compatibility between the two countries’ national development strategies, namely President Xi Jinping’s leading initiative to build the “21st Century Maritime Silk Road” and the strategic concept of the “Global Maritime Fulcrum” recommended by President Jokowi. For China and Indonesia, the two development concepts of the initiative resonate with each other. The development paths are complementary, and the strategic goals of the two sides’ economic development coincide.

As one of the countries that administer the Malacca Strait, Indonesia is deeply disturbed by piracy and maritime terrorism, facing marine crimes such as illegal fishing and smuggling. Maritime security issues involved in the maritime region of Southeast Asia include maritime terrorism, illegal fishing, energy security, transnational crime, maritime search and rescue, water resources and environmental security. Maritime security issues have become a significant security factor for the smooth development of strategic relations Chinese-Indonesian. Since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, maritime security threats in Southeast Asia have gradually increased. Piracy, maritime terrorism, extreme violence at sea, smuggling, drug trafficking and other transboundary criminal activities have become increasingly active, posing a real threat to maritime security in Southeast Asia.

In Southeast Asia, piracy and transnational crimes have not been adequately addressed due to the expansiveness of the seas and the limited capacity of ASEAN nations to implement maritime law (Purwanto, 2016). Existing research has long disregarded security cooperation, and it is also a crucial aspect of the two nations’ strategic partnerships. Security cooperation is a sensitive issue, but its meaning is broad that security cooperation can be initiated in combating piracy and maintaining the safety of sea lanes. Strengthening the development of maritime defence forces in Indonesia also means room for cooperation in military trade between the two sides. The problem of piracy is a potential problem in Southeast Asia (James, 2018). Although the problem of piracy in Southeast Asia

is not rampant and presents a low-violent character, the potential threat of maritime terrorism cannot be ignored. Today, the waters of Indonesia and the adjacent Straits of Malacca and the South China Sea are still waters where piracy and sea robbery are common.

On the one hand, ensuring the security of energy corridors depends on maintaining maritime security and maritime threats such as piracy. On the other hand, maritime security is compromised by many factors, including the aforementioned maritime security challenges of piracy and terrorism, changes in maritime terms, and conflicts between countries. At the same time, security cooperation also means trade in military equipment. Indonesia is committed to building itself into a “respected maritime power”, which requires promoting the country’s maritime forces and the enrichment of maritime weapons and equipment, which makes possible space for China’s exports of military equipment. In fact, in 2016, Indonesia signed a military weapons sales contract with China to purchase the close-in weapon system (CIWS) produced by China North Industries. In 2018, Indonesia equipped the weapon mentioned earlier for the Missile Fast Ship (KCR) (Arif & Chairil, 2020).

The history of Indonesian-Chinese maritime cooperation includes relationships between Indonesian and Chinese forebears. The cooperation between Indonesia and China is dynamic, although there was a break in diplomatic relations during the case of the 30 S/PKI Movement (Zhou, 2014). Then diplomatic relations were re-established, and cooperation in various fields began to be carried out, including maritime cooperation. Both potentials strengthen Indonesia and China’s relationships in developing the maritime sector. Indonesia with the world maritime axis vision and China with the silk route that President Xi Jinping is currently promoting. Maritime cooperation between Indonesia and China has been agreed upon by signing a memorandum of understanding related to maritime defence and security *through the Maritime Cooperation Committee. However, the security cooperation between the two countries is not deep enough. For example, China and Indonesia have not established a fixed mechanism for the bilateral “Sharp Knife” joint training series since 2011* (Chinyong Liow et al., 2017).

There is no fixed mechanism for the exchange of military students between China and Indonesia, and it is occasionally interrupted for several policy reasons. From the existing cooperation, anti-terrorism cooperation is still under the ASEAN framework. Maritime security cooperation has not been conducted in-depth, and cooperation in military equipment trade is only superficial. China and Indonesia will move towards closer cooperation, which depends not only on the fact that the two countries are developing rapidly but also on a high degree of integration between the two countries’ development strategies (Damuri et al., 2019). The two countries face disputes in the exclusive economic zone of the South China Sea, face the insecurity factor of the sea transportation corridor, and face various maritime security threats. In short, the two countries face

common maritime security interests. Strengthening security cooperation and eliminating potential security risks can provide a favourable environment for the strategic development of the two countries. Ultimately, the two countries will achieve joint development and achieve our respective development goals, thereby promoting the development and progress of Asia as a whole and the world.

## 2. Overview China and Indonesia Bilateral Cooperation

Sino-Indonesia partnerships have been established for long history. The ancient inscriptions proved Indonesian kingdoms had relations and cooperation with China. *Sriwijaya*, *Airlangga* and *Majapahit* kingdoms are some outstanding Indonesian Kingdoms that primarily focus on trade with China (Partogi, 2017). The early Indonesians were engaged in trade and were part of the maritime spice trade routes linked to China, Southeast Asia, India, Africa, and the Middle East. They interacted and conducted communication with the Chinese kingdom (Partogi, 2017). In the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, Dutch colonized Indonesia. It made a strategy of welcoming the Chinese considerably to get a position for public services in Batavia, the capital city in history. In addition, the Chinese had the privilege and dominating trade in the overall Indonesia region. Furthermore, this distinguishability stimulated the Indonesian civil movement and created anti-Chinese sentiment.

Five years after Indonesian Independence, under Hatta, the prime minister of Indonesia officially declared China's sovereignty under the Communist party. On April 13, 1950, Sino-Indonesia diplomatic relations were established; the bilateral relationship between the two countries went up and down. In 1955 Chinese Prime Minister Zou Enlai and his delegates attended to Bandung Conference in Indonesia and held an official visit with the Indonesian government. On September 30 1956, Soekarno, the first Indonesia President, visited China for diplomacy.

In Indonesia, domestic affairs faced the dispute between PKI (Indonesian Communist Party) and ABRI (Indonesia Military Force). PKI was an agent of China in spreading communism. However, Soekarno, the first Indonesian president, was trying to balance the power between ABRI and PKI to favour China as its support remained important for Indonesia. Nevertheless, in 1965 PKI was accused of committing a coup against ABRI with China as its initiator. The dispute with ABRI became intense. This reason led Indonesia to break its diplomatic relations with China in 1967. Both countries freeze their diplomatic relations due to the November 30 event, which abolish the Indonesia communism party.

Premier Li Peng visited Indonesia on invitation on August 6, 1990, to strengthen relations with Southeast Asia countries by implementing the Good Neighbour Policy. Its visit restored its diplomatic relation with China after it was frozen for almost a quarter of a century. In his talks with President Soeharto, the second Indonesian President, the two sides expressed their willingness to im-

prove and develop friendly relations and cooperation between the two countries to look forward and based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-Existence and the Ten Principles of Bandung Conference. Some other Scholars mentioned that the background of this policy is an economic reason. China believed that high economic power is one of the substantial sources of soft power.

China's strategy for developing its economy is illustrated in its trade, investment, and strengthening with developing countries. China offers more aid and loans to neighbouring countries in Southeast Asia. Furthermore, this policy triggered the resumption of the diplomatic relation of China to some Southeast Asia countries, including Indonesia. The long journey relations between both countries give China and Indonesia an understanding of each character and can be input for strengthening relations between both countries. The relations have been conducted from high to low politics, such as Official Diplomatic, cultural, economic and Investment Diplomacy.

The recent years have witnessed the constant deepening of economic and trade cooperation and increased trade volume year by year. Exchanges and cooperation in other fields are underway. China and Indonesia have maintained good coordination and cooperation in international and regional affairs. Some of the issues between the two countries left over by history are starting to be solved. Since 1991, the two countries' foreign ministries have set up a consultation mechanism. The bilateral diplomacy between two countries or more mostly is shown in its official embassy. The embassy referred to an ambassador and staff who were sent as a representative of the house government and advanced the interests of one country with another country's government. The relationship understanding of both countries is also depicted by accepting the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Indonesia. Another hand, both top leaders maintain their relationships by visiting and contact.

The two Ministries of Foreign Affairs set up a consultative mechanism and have held five rounds of consultations by 1999. Mutual trust between Sino-Indonesia was established with a strong foundation of bilateral relations. President Yang Shangkun in 1991, Chairman of NPC Standing Committee Qiao Shi in 1993 and Vice Premier Zhu Rongji in 1996 of China visited Indonesia. President Soeharto in 1990, Speaker of Parliament Suhud in 1991, Vice President Sudarmono in 1992 and Chairman of the Supreme Advisory Council Sudomo in 1997 visited China. President Jiang Zemin of China paid a state visit to Indonesia in November 1994 after he attended the second APEC Leaders' Informal Meeting.

In December 1999, President K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid of Indonesia paid a state visit to China, during which the two countries issued a joint press communiqué. In July 2000, Vice President Hu Jintao visited Indonesia at the invitation of Vice President Megawati ([Chinese Embassy for Indonesia, 2004](#)). In March 2002, two countries exchanged notes concerning the setup of Indonesian consulates general in Guangzhou and Shanghai. Indonesia has its Consulate-General

in Hong Kong. While in that year, the fifth Indonesian President, *Megawati Soekarno Putri*, in the Chinese New year meeting, declared officially that Chinese New year to be the national day. The policy means the government officially gives more rights to Indonesian-Chinese to celebrate their cultural day.

The relations between both run in bilateral and multilateral relations. The President of Indonesia came to Beijing to attend the seventh Asia-Europe in October 2008, and more meetings were conducted since the mutual relations keep. The exchange trade increased by 26 per cent this year compared to the previous year (*Defense News*, 2020). In 2013 President Xi Jinping, China president had meeting with Indonesia president, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY). Its meeting focused on deepening from strategic partnership to comprehensive strategic partnership in trade, investment and social welfare. China's Vice prime minister, Liu Yandong, held a meeting with Indonesian President Joko Widodo In Jakarta on November 29, 2017. She emphasized that China's president and Indonesia's president held many conferences and agreed, especially on the strategy of developing both countries under the One Belt, One Road initiative (*Fitriani*, 2021). The intimate relationship between Sino-Indonesia will bring positive effects to both countries and support the peace and development in the region. Furthermore, China and Indonesia have maintained good coordination and cooperation in international and regional affairs. Some of the issues between the two countries left over by history are starting to be solved.

### **2.1. Indonesia's National Security Interest**

There are seven pillars of Indonesian Ocean Policy, namely: the management of marine resources and the development of human resources; maritime security, law enforcement and safety at sea; ocean governance and institution; economic and infrastructure of marine sector and of prosperity enhancement; management of the ocean space and protection of marine environment; maritime culture; and maritime diplomacy. Through diplomacy, Indonesia can support resource management by designing international norms for the management and utilization of maritime resources appropriately, responsibly, environmentally friendly and paying attention to sustainability for future generations. Through a mutually beneficial partnership with neighboring countries that Indonesia has established and may develop, Indonesia's relationships with other countries and international organizations can help Indonesia attain dependable human resource competency in the marine sector.

Appropriate diplomacy can also transform Indonesia's relationship with other countries in a more cooperative path, assisting in the development of Indonesia's defense capabilities and capacities, as well as Indonesia's efforts to secure its territorial waters and maintain regional stability. The implementation of foreign policy might be focused to ensuring that international and domestic laws are in synchronization, bolstering Indonesia's ability to play a proactive role in safeguarding the country's character. Strengthening the diplomatic policy may assist

Indonesia reap more advantages from the growth of geostrategic dynamics for the goals of increasing national economic capability and stimulating infrastructure development, both of which have emerged as the government's primary concerns. Indonesia's initiatives to strengthen spatial planning and maritime preservation will almost probably have diplomatic repercussions, which will need to be properly planned and coordinated with international partnerships. In addition, Indonesia can cooperate with neighboring countries to promote Indonesian marine cultural values and seek historical links and understanding with these countries.

Indonesia's territorial security is jeopardized by the problems of people trafficking, illicit drug trafficking, and illegal weapons trafficking, among other things. Throughout the case of small arms and light weapons, for example, hundreds of thousands of illegal small arms and light weapons are distributed in Southeast Asia every year, with more than 80 percent of the weapons being transported by sea. Regarding Indonesia's vulnerability to foreign operations in its sea lane territories, it is conceivable that the country may be exploited as an entry point for illicit commerce. To effectively deal with security disruptions at sea, collaboration is required at all levels, including regional, national, and international.

However, COVID-19 has been shocking globally for more than a year. Although it is first and foremost a global public health problem, the repercussions of its occurrence have far-reaching implications. Scholars from various fields, including economics, sociologists, and psychologists, have begun to examine the changes caused by the epidemic. Economic implications are the most significant of these secondary consequences by a long shot. According to Fraser, the pandemic would result in a more severe international economic disaster than the 2007 global financial crisis or the 1997 Asian financial crisis. Governments are being forced to take exceptional measures to prepare for this eventuality. Their policy responses will have a far-reaching effect on public health issues well beyond the core of global pandemic.

These ramifications are already being seen in the field of maritime security. Indonesia has announced a reduction in the military budget of about \$590 million. This significant budget shift away from the military sector will have an immediate effect on the budget of the Indonesian navy, which is at the forefront of the country's maritime security and domain awareness efforts. Indonesia is not alone in this; many Asian countries have cut their military expenditures by a total of \$555 million for the fiscal year 2020 (*Defense News*, 2020). Similar limitations are in place in other critical maritime nations in the region, such as Malaysia, Vietnam, and the Philippines.

According to Darmawan, these substantial budget reallocations would harm military capabilities and likely result in weakened or canceled joint exercises. The Philippines has already canceled its joint military exercise with the United States and Australia, Balikatan 2020. The United States sponsored Rim of the



Pacific exercise has been reduced from a five-week event in 2018 to a two-week event that will take place entirely at sea in 2019 (Rizka Darmawan, 2021). Concerning the Indonesian Military, the GMF idea had little impact on the function of the Navy, which the Army has always controlled. While the GMF was mentioned in the 2016 Defense White Paper, there is no information on how and if the Indonesian Military would concentrate more on the Navy. Internal security challenges are discussed extensively in the white paper, one of the most severe risks to national security, emphasizing internal institution conflicts, radical ideologies, and foreign infiltration.

In addition, the GMF achieved nothing to further the Navy's modernization efforts. By 2024, the government hopes to have completed the Minimum Essential Force (MEF) plan, which calls for the Navy to have 10 - 12 submarines, 56 frigates and corvettes, and 66 patrol vessels. The MEF blueprint was developed by the previous administration and is based on current military capabilities (Pike, 2018). However, despite substantial procurements in the previous three years, including the delivery in 2017 and 2018 of two *Nagapasa-class* submarines from South Korea, as well as the launch in 2019 of a third submarine by Indonesian shipbuilder PAL company, the Navy is impossible to encounter the MEF during the remaining five years, as specified under a transfer technology agreement with a South Korean shipbuilder (Vavasseur, 2019). The Navy currently has five submarines, three more are on the way thanks to a \$1 billion deal with Daewoo Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering of South Korea, 13 frigates, and 20 corvettes (Yon Hap, 2021).

Unfortunately, the Navy's principal weapons have not been updated due to budgetary restrictions. Early in his term, President Jokowi pledged to increase the military budget to 1.5 percent of GDP over the following five years if the economy expanded at a rate of 7 percent. Indonesia has spent between 0.7 and 0.9 percent of GDP each year on defense since 2014 while having had yearly GDP growth of just 5 percent since 2014 (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2021). Although the Army continues to be given top priority in buying, there is still a big issue with the prioritizing of acquisition.

In the 2019-2022 Budget Working Plan, issued by the Ministry of Finance, it is revealed that the Army would get an average of around 5.1 billion rupiahs (approximately \$350,000) each year for modernization of weapons and non-weapons systems and facilities. Meanwhile, the Navy will receive an average of IDR 3.7 billion (approximately \$259,000) per year for the same category (Ministry of Finance of Republic of Indonesia, 2021). One may argue that this makes logic because the government has signed contracts for almost \$2 billion to buy six submarines in the last three years. However, in an archipelago where the water covers 84 percent of the land area, the operating strategy does not seem to be a promising future for the Navy. The Navy is further hampered, in addition to a lack of modernization, by the dilemma of overlapping authority, which includes the controversial inter-institutional rivalries and bureaucratic inefficiencies



among the 13 entities engaged in maritime security, including the Navy, Maritime Security Agency, and the Police (Moudgil, 2017).

According to Spies, piracy is another possible threat to Indonesia's maritime security, which Covid-19 might worsen. Indonesia and Southeast Asia have long been considered among the most hazardous pirate hotspots on the planet. It is estimated that between 1993 and 2015, Southeast Asia was the site of more than 60% of all maritime piracy incidents, with more than 20% of those incidents occurring in Indonesian waters alone. Because of the pandemic's economic effect, the number of piracy cases may grow. Piracy may grow as a side effect of the pandemic's economic recession, which may affect the military and marine law enforcement organizations charged with combating it (Hoang Anh, 2022).

Meanwhile Robert McCabe explained there were just ten incidences of piracy in Indonesian seas in 1993. However, by 1999, just two years following the Asian Financial Crisis, the number of events had climbed to 115, representing a more than tenfold increase in less than ten years (Camdessus, 1997). In another report from the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Pirate and Armed Robbery, it is revealed that the number of pirate incidents increased by 25 percent in 2010, two years after the global financial crisis of 2008 (Kyrychenko, 2018). It is most probable that these increases are the consequence of a combination of increasing capacity at sea and budget reductions. These modifications will also affect maritime cooperation initiatives such as coordinated pirate patrols, which will be affected. As Indonesia implements the necessary budget cutbacks in light of the economic effect of COVID-19, it must keep in mind the ramifications of such reallocations and the problems that are most likely to arise in the present economic climate.

Regarding security, Indonesia should pay close attention to dangers expected to grow both during and after the epidemic and those already present. Due to growing concerns about maritime security from an increasingly aggressive China and the threat of piracy, which is expected to increase in the aftermath of the pandemic, Indonesia's naval capabilities must be carefully controlled due to budget cutbacks. Assume that Indonesia can decide which skills should be prioritized. Therefore, it will be able to minimize the effect of these cutbacks on security in its waters and regional security, all to the advantage of humanity.

There are two significant reasons why Indonesia's fisheries potential and trade routes are critical to the country's political economy and national security. First, the country's fisheries potential and trade routes are critical for the country's political economy and national security. To begin with, the fisheries industry and trade channels provide critical resources for the national economy of the marine sector. International diplomacy may be carried out via the management of marine resources, which attracts foreign investment and promotes economic and political cooperation. First and foremost, illegal fishing is a conduit to worldwide narcotics trafficking and other related crimes.

The efficient utilization of marine resources and trade routes is not tricky.

One of the challenges that must be overcome is the danger at sea. The maritime pirates' activities cause disruptions in global supply networks, resulting in interrupted global commerce flow. The hijacking of ships carrying vital commodities such as oil and coal by armed people has occurred in Somalia and the Philippines, amongst other locations. In certain instances, the spillage of oil or coal as a result of piracy may cause harm to the sea and coral reefs, which serve as fish breeding grounds. IUU fishing has attracted increased attention from archipelagic nations such as Indonesia, piracy, and other illegal maritime activities.

The preservation and protection of the marine economy must be supported by an increase in the number of elements of maritime security. A guarantee of the state's presence in fulfilling the fundamental rights of its people, maritime security takes the shape of security stability. According to the Present Addendum to the Report of the Secretary-General on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, illicit activities such as drug trafficking, human trafficking, organized crime, terrorist actions, piracy, and armed robbery pose a threat danger to maritime security and navigation.

*Sea lane security* is a shared duty that involves all countries and international organizations. ASEAN developed this concept in response to security concerns in Southeast Asian countries. Indonesia's first strategic circle, ASEAN, is critical when cracking down on marine transboundary crimes. The ASEAN Community 2025 document states maritime security includes combating maritime terrorism, trafficking in persons and weapons, drug and human trafficking, piracy and robbery, armed pirates onboard ships, illegal oil spills, and IUU fishing in international territories.

As explained earlier, threats to maritime security are cross-border, as are efforts to overcome these threats. A country cannot optimally overcome maritime security threats without cooperation with other countries. Therefore, international cooperation is needed to overcome maritime security threats to increase the effectiveness of handling maritime threats in the region and internationally. For Indonesia, international cooperation in the maritime security sector is integral in implementing diplomacy. As the second biggest archipelagic country in Southeast Asia, Indonesia possesses a maritime territory subject to several national security challenges. It will be difficult for Indonesia to overcome its maritime security threats without establishing cooperation with regional countries and other countries at the international level.

Therefore, Indonesia needs to optimize regional and international regimes as described in the previous section to support the creation of regional maritime security stability, especially in international seas. Maritime security needs to be maintained because there is a possibility of a security threat to Indonesia and the region with the increasing volume of world trade through sea routes, which impacts increasingly dense shipping activities along Indonesian sea lanes. Consequently, this overcrowding creates several non-traditional environmental and security disturbances. Indonesia emphasizes efforts to increase sea defense due

to pressure from big countries that do not want their interests disturbed in Indonesian waters. If Indonesia cannot fulfill maritime security guarantees adequately, there is a possibility that significant countries will “take advantage of this inability by deploying their maritime power in this route. If this happens, it will undoubtedly threaten the sovereignty of Indonesia’s maritime territory.

The Indonesian Defense White Paper 2008 and 2015 states that security stability is part of Indonesia’s national interest. Therefore, Indonesia needs to observe the development of security conditions in various spheres to identify security priorities and take appropriate steps. Indonesia is also aware that its national security is part of the strategic interests of other countries. Therefore, the implementation of the defense and security functions of the Indonesian state is directed at realizing national security stability that is conducive to regional and global stability.

Meanwhile, in the global scope, the development of the security environment also influences security characteristics by presenting an increasingly complex security concept. These developments affect the existing concept of security. National security threats are now becoming more multidimensional with the emergence of new security issues. In addition, security threats can now also come from state and non-state actors and military and non-military in nature. Maritime security is also affected by these developments. Issues that pose a threat to maritime security and comprehensively, in the sense that it is not limited to a certain point of view.

In the regional sphere, Southeast Asia is one of the most important marine areas. Southeast Asian maritime routes are among the busiest sea routes. Due to its important position between the Indian and Pacific Oceans, the Southeast Asian maritime region is frequented by trade ships passing through or transiting. Furthermore, the fact that Indonesia intends to optimize its strategic position further and the management and utilization of its marine resources makes maritime security a crucial issue for Indonesia. Based on this, in the Asia Pacific region, security issues focus on terrorism, transnational organized crime, and potential conflicts, in general, originating from territorial claims.

In the maritime context, maritime security is Indonesia’s main national interest because of the strategic aspects. If Indonesia does not immediately make maritime security a top priority, Indonesia will suffer many losses. Acts of crime rampant at sea will negatively impact the flow of national and international trade that passes through Indonesia’s sea territory. Maintaining maritime security in Indonesia means maintaining the security of sea services and transportation in Indonesia and Southeast Asia. The condition of lack of security at sea will also harm efforts to utilize marine resources to affect the welfare of the community. In the end, well-maintained maritime security can bring benefits in regional stability or economic prosperity.

## 2.2. China and Indonesia Maritime Security Issues

From the general perspective of cooperation between China and Indonesia, there are main propositions about the two countries' maritime security threats. Potential security threats caused by maritime restrictions. China and Indonesia were facing these issues (Acharya, 2014). Due to the complexity of geographical conditions and restrictions on the international law of the sea. Behind the friction of maritime boundaries are the contradictions of maritime interests of various countries. The involvement of extraterritorial threat to regional maritime, particularly the power competition between China, the United States, Japan and India in Southeast Asia, has brought much uncertainty to regional security. That includes the impact on security cooperation between countries in the region and the possibility of armed conflict caused by direct armed intervention.

The dispute is about the exclusive economic zones between China and Indonesia. Although there is no sovereignty dispute between the two countries, disputes at the national level over the North Natuna region are relatively quiet (Siow, 2021). However, minor fishing disputes can develop into major military conflicts when faced with the influence of some nationalist sentiments in Indonesia and the threat of rigid military policies. Non-traditional security threats such as anti-terrorism and maritime crimes. On this issue, the two countries share common interests and are more likely to find ways to cooperate in non-traditional security areas. These threats are terrorism, extremism, piracy, transnational crime, drug trafficking, and human trafficking, which should be the concern of both countries.

## 3. Indonesia and China Cooperation in Security Sector

In the face of complex maritime security threats, at a critical stage of the continued strategic progress of the two countries, it is necessary to strengthen the docking of security cooperation and jointly eliminate security threats through deeper security cooperation. The researchers elaborated on the issue of the status quo of security cooperation between the two countries, interviewed relevant informants, and conducted research on relevant documents and materials. The results of the study are as follows.

China-Indonesia security cooperation is an essential foundation for cooperation between China and Indonesia. The two countries' leaders also attach great importance to developing bilateral relations. The two nations have significant possibilities for security partnerships because of their complex geopolitical security environment and the necessity for a secure environment established by their economic cooperation. The basis for cooperation between the two countries is also solid, with the attention of the leaders of both sides and national strategies and the continuous improvement of cooperation documents and statements. Cooperation between the two countries is in line with the new win-win international relations, but there are specific problems in mutual trust, which require joint efforts from both sides to overcome them.

Security cooperation between China and Indonesia continues to be strengthened by deepening the strategic partnership between the two sides. Security cooperation includes policy docking, military trade, personnel training, joint exercises and defence technology. However, the level of institutionalization of security cooperation is still low, and it is more of an informal mechanism for security cooperation. This mechanism is not fully binding on the behaviour of all parties (Christin Sinaga, 2018). The mechanism's operation depends more on bilateral and multilateral interest or awareness. Whether or not both parties follow this mechanism depends more on the national interests of both parties. When one party thinks that this mechanism is no longer for its own sake, that mechanism no longer exists. For example, since 2000, the "China-ASEAN Defense and Security Dialogue", originally planned to be held once a year, has also been suspended after two meetings.

The anti-terrorism drills of the Chinese and Indonesian military's "Sharp Knife" series have not been planned after three times. A series of security cooperation mechanisms between the two parties does not have a long-term perspective. Further is the formation of the two sides based on the development of the situation and problems. On the other hand, non-traditional security threats constantly change, and content is constantly evolving. The establishment of mechanisms must be targeted and responsive (Sriyanto, 2018). However, many cooperation mechanisms in this area are empty; how to achieve the change from crisis management becomes a problem that the current security cooperation mechanism must solve.

Strategic cooperation and docking between China and Indonesia are already at their best in history, but there are still many shortcomings in security cooperation between the two countries. This shortcoming will affect the further deepening of cooperation between the two countries; some contradictions are not handled properly and may damage the strategic docking between the two countries. Before we stand in the historic opportunity, the two countries hope to deepen cooperation further and jointly win the country's strategic development opportunities.

### **3.1. China-Indonesia Cooperation on Maritime Security**

The ninth meeting of the Technical Committee Meeting on Marine Cooperation, which was first convened after bilateral diplomacy between President Jokowi and President Xi Jinping at the APEC Summit, is one of the approaches to accomplish GMF ambitions in maritime diplomacy. This bilateral conference reached an agreement on Sea Satellite Security, the China-Indonesia Table Top Maritime SAR (National Search and Rescue Agency) Exercise Project, and the Indonesia-China Center for Ocean and Climate (ICCOC) (Indonesia Embassy in Beijing for China and Mongolia, 2015). In maritime cooperation, both nations have maritime collaboration and agreement on Maritime Cooperation Committee (MCC) and China-Indonesia Maritime Cooperation Fund (MCF) to expedite

the execution of such projects as remote satellite application ground station, China-Indonesia joint table-top exercise of maritime search and rescue, and the China-Indonesia centre for ocean and climate.

Regarding GMF implementation on maritime security, China paid particular attention to the preparedness of the Indonesia Coast Guard as the monitor and first line of defence in Indonesian maritime. It signifies that China guaranteed the secure and safe implementation of GMF in Zone Economy Exclusive Indonesia maritime territory. Piracy is still a significant worry in South-East Asia's maritime security. Notably, the Malacca Strait is at increased danger of pirate assaults. The International Maritime Bureau has classified Indonesian ports and territorial seas as the most pirate-infested in South-East Asia (Parameswaran, 2015).

In terms of countering piracy, Indonesia collaborated with neighbouring nations to develop a multilateral approach, although it was challenging to implement. Multilateral efforts to curb piracy are expected to remain modest. Instead of exploring more comprehensive global solutions, Jokowi's maritime philosophy prioritises unilateral action against marine threats. In response to the surge in piracy on Indonesian seas, the president established the BAKAMLA (Indonesia Coast Guard) and vowed to enhance military funding. Furthermore, the Indonesia Coast Guard and the TNI (Indonesian Army) enforce Indonesian maritime law. Officers are the first line of defence responsible for marine crime and maritime offenders.

To eradicate pirate and illegal fishing, the Indonesian navy and BAKAMLA propose utilising a "green water" navy to police and protect Indonesia's EEZ. The Indonesian navy contributes to regional maritime security by participating in the Malacca Straits Ship Patrol (MSSP), a coordinated and collaborative anti-piracy patrol by sea and air conducted by Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand. The MSSP's effectiveness in decreasing piracy in western waterways prompted Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines to agree in May 2016 to joint and coordinated patrols in the Sulu and Sulawesi seas (Thompson, 2017).

China increased engagement with Indonesia's military forces, indicated by preparations for coordinated patrols against illegal Chinese fishing vessels and a new combined special Forces exercise linked to China's desire to protect access to these coastal lanes (Grossman, 2021). In addition to the mindset mentioned earlier, the prospect of the partnership between Indonesia and China to eliminate illegal fishing may be inferred from several bilateral meetings between Presidents Joko Widodo and Xi Jinping on international platforms such as the ASEAN Summit and President Jokowi's official visit to China in May 2017. Both nations also addressed transnational crime, including illegal fishing, and promised mutual assistance in combating the crime of illegal fishing (Pratiwi et al., 2021).

The Government's Attitude China is willing to assist The Government of Joko Widodo on GMF, including BAKAMLA, in promoting maritime cooperation by

supplying satellite assistance to International China Aerospace Technology. It is proposed to put the satellite in Bangka and Belitung for weather monitoring and fishing assistance. In reality, the Chinese government has given a \$40 billion aid package to Indonesia in order to accomplish the initiative project. Indonesia's Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs, Luhut Binsar Panjaitan, praised the alliance with China by emphasising Indonesia's role in building cyber defence (Nabbs-Keller & Nugroho Widodo, 2021).

### 3.2. China and Indonesia in South China Sea Tensions

Cooperation between the two countries is emphasized in three significant areas of the maritime sector, which must be maintained to construct the future architecture of cooperative partnerships. First marine cooperation in which Jokowi's ambition is to transform Indonesia into a maritime axis, similar to Xin Jinping's proposal to construct a new maritime silk road. It seeks to improve maritime connectivity and enhance Southeast Asian nations' capabilities to optimize security and manage marine resources. The South Sea conflict is the second collaboration in controlling the region, which compels Indonesia to manage the conflict actively. The cooperative stance of Indonesia will encourage China to address the problem via peaceful conversation. Third, collaboration to improve ties between the two nations' citizenry. It is because the people determine Indonesian and Chinese ties.

Indonesia and China undertake their defence and security collaboration via military cooperation, including Air Force, Army, and Navy cooperation and technology transfer. Indonesia lacks the funds, personnel, technology, and transportation required to bolster its marine force. In addition to joint exercises, technology transfer is a diplomatic tool. Both nations must be aware of their competence and the negotiating power of the countries benefited by technology transfer to use it. Indonesia and China are working on a transfer of C-705 missile technology. Indonesia needs sixty principal defensive system tools to achieve Minimum Essential Force (MEF) military standards to monitor and combat maritime law infractions (Rahmat, 2022).

Indonesia's success in maritime diplomacy with various countries, notably China, has led to the formation of several partnerships that may contribute to the fulfilment of GMF pillars. The Indonesia-China Navy-to-Navy Cooperation Dialogue has been conducted yearly since 2015 and focuses on maritime security cooperation. Through this agreement, Indonesia has acquired the sixty central defence systems (defence equipment) required as part of the Minimum Essential Force for maritime states. Maritime diplomacy is one of the accomplished areas of partnership based on Indonesia's success in creating comprehensive and strategic engagement via the maritime silk route and global maritime fulcrum concepts. These two ideas have led to increased investment and cooperation between Indonesia and China in various industries.

Meanwhile, this issue remains central to Indonesia's geopolitical perspective



on the South China Sea conflict. There is a strong feeling of nationalism and regional security in the opinions of Indonesian stakeholders towards collaboration between Indonesia and China in the fisheries sector. The impression of possible collaboration between Indonesia and China in the South China Sea, particularly in the North Natuna Sea region, is primarily influenced by Indonesia's position on sovereign rights. Indonesia considers itself a non-claiming state, although a portion of China's 'nine-dot line' claim overlaps with Natuna Island's exclusive economic zone.

In the absence of a specific course of action in a specific direction, Indonesia will be cautious when responding to future calls for assistance to avoid situations that violate Indonesia's stated position on the South China Sea problem. Several Indonesian stakeholders agreed that the two countries enjoyed extensive fishing cooperation in the past. However, almost all of them advocate collaboration in other water sectors and adherence to two streams of legislation that have generated additional opportunities.

China and Indonesia committed to increasing their maritime, political, economic, cultural, and people-to-people relations in June 2021. Wang Yi, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister, co-chaired a meeting with Luhut Binsar Panjaitan, special envoy and China coordinator for the Indonesian president in Guying, China (Bin, 2021). The agreement was reached at the inaugural meeting of the China-Indonesia high-level forum bilateral mechanism. Both countries are contemplating intensifying their efforts to integrate the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) with Indonesia's Global Maritime Fulcrum vision, with the development of the Jakarta-Bandung High-Speed Railway and the regional comprehensive economic corridor taking centre stage.

By cooperating with China, Indonesia may accomplish its goal of bolstering its maritime capabilities and becoming a global maritime hub. Meanwhile, China can develop links with other ASEAN nations via Indonesia more simply. Indonesia and China are responsible for expanding their collaboration in the fields of business, infrastructure, military, and security. Both have a substantial impact on the issues in the South China Sea. Indonesia must increase its level of confidence in China in order to expand collaboration. China must also limit its aggression in the South China Sea in order to encourage Indonesia and ASEAN to cooperate with it.

### **3.3. China and Indonesia Cooperation to Address Maritime Security Threats**

China and Indonesia's cooperation and development are in a rare period of crucial strategic opportunities in history; regardless of whether these opportunities can be grasped, they are significant for the two countries' development. However, the geopolitical complexity of the Asia-Pacific region and the potential security threats around the South China Sea are not being ignored due to the two countries' strategic docking and economic development. The two countries must

adequately understand the resistance to deepening security cooperation and thereby develop effective ways to deepen security cooperation to eliminate common maritime security threats. Countering maritime security threats against China and Indonesia can only be achieved through more comprehensive and in-depth security cooperation.

Maritime security cooperation is driven by the common interests of countries and takes concrete steps and coordinated actions in the political, diplomatic, economic, military and technological fields, ways to counteract and overcome traditional and non-traditional security threats in the sea direction and achieve mutual security. In order to eliminate common maritime security threats, China and Indonesia must take coordinated actions and practical and effective measures from various fields to eliminate traditional and non-traditional security threats and achieve mutual interests and security. The governments of both countries should guide internal experts and scholars in relevant fields to research various aspects such as culture, laws and regulations, customs, defence, and military, and motivate the formulation of maritime security cooperation policies. Especially in defence and military aspects, strengthen exchanges between defence think tanks of the two sides and explore new ways and means of security cooperation between the two sides.

According to the win-win theory and building a new type of great power relationship, it is essential to strengthen security cooperation between China and Indonesia and eliminate security threats. The construction of a “new type of great power relationship” has dramatically affected China-Indonesia security cooperation. The development of maritime diplomacy aims to make the oceans a bond of cooperation, so it is essential to proactively resolve the existing confrontations in traditional geopolitics and make them more lenient. This way, Southeast Asia will no longer develop into a frontier of confrontation between East and West, and countries like Indonesia may no longer be in a dilemma.

Therefore, starting by establishing a “new type of great power relationship”, easing the strategic competition between China and Japan the United States in the region, and strengthening cooperation between major powers, or creating a better environment for China’s maritime security cooperation Indonesia, can even produce positive results. Only when relations between various countries in the region are harmonious and stable can we build a good order of cooperation, eliminate security threats and maintain a sound security environment.

From the discussion above, a proposition can be made that counteracting maritime security threats must be achieved by strengthening cooperation between China and Indonesia. The two countries should work together to build a new win-win relationship between major powers, eliminate the crisis of confidence in the region, and create a good foundation for cooperation. According to the above discussion, it is possible to conclude that countering maritime security concerns requires more collaboration between China and Indonesia. The two nations should collaborate to establish a new win-win partnership between sig-

nificant powers, erase the confidence crisis in the area, and establish a solid basis for cooperation. Strengthen communication at the government level, explore new means and techniques of security collaboration, deepen security cooperation, construct multi-level and multi-field security cooperation mechanisms, and create a win-win security order mutually advantageous to China and Indonesia. Eliminate maritime security risks common to the area.

#### 4. Conclusion

The maritime security risks China and Indonesia confront allude to the danger to the maritime order posed by geopolitical, political, economic, natural, and manufactured elements, which have harmed the economic, commercial, security, and national interests of the nations in question. It is long-term, intricate, and international. From the standpoint of collaboration between China and Indonesia, the two nations face the following maritime security concerns. Non-traditional security concerns include terrorism, piracy, and other marine crimes, such as the smuggling of illicit items such as narcotics and weapons, smuggling of people, hijacking ships with weapons, abduction, and other transnational crimes losses to maritime commerce resulting from natural catastrophes at sea.

In addition to the security mentioned earlier, risks, security difficulties and other disagreements between the two nations have the potential to evolve into security threats. The ambiguity of maritime demarcation, notably the China-Indonesia fisheries conflict, poses potential security risks. Behind the friction of maritime borders are the competing marine interests of different nations. Threats to regional security have resulted from intruding extraterritorial powers, notably the power rivalry between China, the United States, Japan, and India in Southeast Asia, which has introduced several unclear aspects to regional security.

Increasing the strategic alliance between China and Indonesia strengthens security cooperation between the two countries. Security cooperation includes policy alignment, military commerce, personnel training, joint exercises, and defence technology transfer. The grounds and circumstances for security cooperation between the two nations are quite significant, on the one hand, owing to the complicated geopolitical security scenario in which they are placed. On the other hand, a secure environment is required for the long-term growth of economic cooperation between the two sides. The collaboration between the two nations is consistent with the new win-win international relations, but trust issues need the collective efforts of both countries to resolve. In addition, the degree of security coordination mechanisms remains low, and most of them are informal. Existing security cooperation structures must also solve the dilemma of achieving change through crisis management.

To combat the maritime security risks that China and Indonesia face, China and Indonesia must deepen their security cooperation. By establishing new foreign relationships that are mutually advantageous, the two nations should strengthen their strategic mutual trust. Promoting a new security paradigm in

the area may address the “security challenge”. Attempt to develop multi-level collaboration in the sphere of national defence and increase mutual political and security confidence. For instance, by enhancing exchanges and cooperation in military education, national defence technologies, and crisis management, the potential danger of violence resulting from fisheries conflicts may be reduced by implementing efficient fisheries cooperation agreements. Increase direct military collaboration, develop mutual military confidence, and jointly address threats to maritime security. Based on defence cooperation in other fields, increase the openness of the two sides’ military field, improve cooperation mechanisms such as joint exercises, personnel training, disaster management, and anti-terrorism cooperation.

The South China Sea several follow-up measures are proposed for China and Indonesia based on the study and findings mentioned above with cooperation to combat the menace of marine crimes. The government should promote the increased integration of the two nations’ security plans. The two countries’ governments should actively encourage experts to explore new regional security cooperation mechanisms. The two nations may develop new channels for regional security cooperation, particularly given Indonesia’s leadership position in ASEAN. Maintain peace and stability in the South China Sea area without interference from foreign forces by establishing new security structures, mutual trust, and security cooperation. Explore innovative methods for addressing challenges in the South China Sea. Due to the two nations’ shared interests, the South China Sea problem necessitates the introduction of new regional cooperation structures to counteract the challenges of significant powers to regional security by its complexity and globalization. China can rely on the strategies of China and Indonesia to explore new models of cooperation in the Indian Ocean region and to propose the establishment of an “Organization Cooperation around the Bay of Bengal + 1 (China)” mechanism that includes Indonesia in order to alleviate pressure on the South China Sea issue.

Enhance military trade collaboration between the two nations to boost security cooperation. China should pay attention to Indonesia’s lack of maritime law enforcement capabilities and its urgent need to enhance maritime authority. Indonesia’s aspiration to become a “recognized maritime power” necessitates the development of the nation’s maritime strength, which creates opportunities for China’s military-industrial exports. By enhancing collaboration in these sectors, the two nations may increase their marine might and deepen their cooperation.

Increase mutual trust and multi-purpose interactions and collaboration. Understanding Indonesia’s attempts to preserve its interests and protect ASEAN unity and cooperation with China has specific protections from Indonesia’s perspective. Understand and respect Indonesia’s marine feelings and national independence, and encourage the steady development of China-Indonesia ties. It was second, enhancing bilateral multi-level contacts in all disciplines, including politics, economics, the humanities, education, and religion. Promote the com-

monwealth of the people and build the groundwork for amicable contacts between the two nations by eliminating misconceptions, giving local Chinese and abroad Chinese a role, and aggressively spreading Chinese culture.

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## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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