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Ukraine - Russia, G20 Summit, and Indonesia's Presidency Challenge

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ABSTRACT

This article describes three key issues in the global geopolitical context: the conflict between Ukraine and Russia, Indonesia's role as president of the G20 Summit, and the challenges faced in addressing both. The conflict between Ukraine and Russia has been a source of international tension since 2014, with far-reaching consequences for regional and global stability. Meanwhile, Indonesia, as president of the G20 Summit, is faced with the important task of facilitating dialogue between member states in addressing global economic issues, including the prolonged impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Using content analysis research methods and in-depth interviews with the Ukrainian Ambassador and the Russian Ambassador, this research addresses the key challenge for Indonesia of playing an effective mediation role in the Ukraine-Russia conflict while promoting economic cooperation and global justice. The solution to this challenge requires active cooperation between G20 member states and a focus on inclusive economic recovery and sustainable peace.

1. Introduction

The conflict between Ukraine and Russia has become one of the most prominent geopolitical issues in the international arena in recent years. It initially began in 2014 when Russia militarily occupied Crimea, a strategic region in Ukraine, after a controversial referendum deemed illegal by most Western countries and Ukraine itself. This conflict is not a new conflict; it was part of a vestige of the cold war that is still ongoing today, although there are some who argue that the Cold War is long over since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Union (Universitas Islam Indonesia, 2022)

This action led to an international crisis involving economic sanctions from many Western countries against Russia. The conflict has continued to evolve into a civil war in eastern Ukraine, where separatist forces backed by Russia and Ukrainian government

forces are fighting for control of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. International mediation efforts have been made, including by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), however, the situation remains tense and there has been no clear resolution.

In the years that followed, Ukraine continued to struggle to consolidate its sovereignty and assert its independent national identity, while Russia maintained its position as the dominant regional power in the region. The conflict has not only resulted in human suffering and heavy economic losses for both sides but has also triggered wider geopolitical tensions between Russia and Western countries, especially the United States and the European Union. In general, geopolitics always refers to the relationship between politics and several phenomena that occur in a territorial area, both on a local and international



scale that affect the situation in the surrounding country and at large (Arifianto, 2023).

Indonesia, which pursues a policy of freedom to be active in international conflicts, gives it the freedom to act without depending on any force. This shows that Indonesia is not participating in conflicts with Russia or Ukraine. Using a personal soft power approach, Indonesia tries to mitigate negative effects by reducing import-exports, rising prices, food emergencies, and international security hazards. It aims to encourage new completions and innovations, as well as help find solutions. Due to its negative impact on many things, including global trade, the 2022 conflict between Russia and Ukraine is of international concern (Hutabarat, 2022)

Apart from the conflict, Russia is one of the countries that is also included in the G20 which is an international economic cooperation forum consisting of countries with large economies in the world consisting of 19 countries and the European Union. On the other hand, Indonesia, which received the mandate to hold the Presidency of the Group of Twenty (G20), played an important role in designing the agenda for meetings at various meetings in the G20 Summit in Bali.

Therefore, according to Mas'udi, to end the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, Indonesia uses the first track diplomacy method, namely negotiations and collaboration, which provides opportunities to reconcile the two countries (Tiara et al., 2023). In addition, Indonesia has an economic interest in the effort, creating a positive image, and completing the agenda of the G20 Summit. The case eventually became the goal of Indonesia's soft power, which aims to improve world security by portraying Indonesia as a good country by using soft resources as the leader of the G20 summit.

Indonesia, as a member of the G20, has actively participated in this meeting with the aim of promoting its national interests as well as playing a constructive role in formulating global policies. In the G20 Summit,

Indonesia has emphasized the importance of international cooperation in addressing global economic challenges, including combating economic inequality, promoting inclusive economic growth, and strengthening a fair and sustainable international trading system. In addition, Indonesia has also advocated for sustainable development issues, including climate change, food security, and infrastructure development.

As president of the G20 Summit, Indonesia is faced with several complex and pressing challenges. One of the main challenges is dealing with heightened geopolitical tensions, especially in the context of the ongoing Ukraine-Russia conflict. This conflict not only has the potential to destabilize the global economy, but also poses a threat to the basic principles of international security. The Indonesian president needs to play an active mediation role in facilitating dialogue between the parties involved in the Ukraine-Russia conflict, in the hope of reaching a sustainable peaceful solution. This diplomatic effort requires patience, political acumen, and high negotiation skills from the Indonesian side, as well as full support from other G20 members.

Despite the United States' insistence on the Indonesian government to refuse to invite Russia to the G20 summit in Bali. On the other hand, Russia, which still has a conflict with Ukraine, insisted on attending the summit. Undoubtedly, Indonesia was in a difficult position when it approved a draft UN resolution calling on Russia to halt its attack on Ukraine. To condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the United Nations held an Emergency Special Session in early March 2022. Indonesia also approved the draft resolution. The United States considers this as a reason why Indonesia should not invite Russia to the G20 summit meeting.

According to Pakpahan (2022), there are three explanations for Indonesia still inviting Russia to the G20 Summit in Bali. (1) The G20 meeting is an international forum that discusses international



cooperation on world economic issues. This year's G20 meeting focuses on Recover Together, Recover Stronger, focusing on three key issues: global health architecture, sustainable energy transition, and digital and economic transformation. (2) there is no mechanism in the G20 forum to punish a country for actions taken in a non-economic context. At least, until now there has never been a non-invitation of a country by the host country of the G20 presidency. (3) Indonesia's position as the G20 presidency is very strategic to carry out better relations between North-South and South-South, especially in the global economic recovery amid this pandemic situation. Indonesia's leadership will be tested in this G20 presidency (Pakpahan, 2022). The escalation of the conflict between Ukraine and Russia has had a significant impact on global issues of major concern to the G20, particularly related to food security and energy prices.

Ukraine is one of the main exporters of wheat and other food products. The ongoing conflict in the country has disrupted food production and distribution in the Eastern European region. As an important agrarian country, the disruption has far-reaching repercussions, especially in a region dependent on food imports from Ukraine that ultimately creates tensions in global food supplies. Due to uncertainty in supply, international food prices may increase. These price increases can have a negative impact on countries that are already vulnerable to rising food prices, such as developing countries and poor populations around the world.

With Russia one of the world's major producers of oil and gas, the Ukraine-Russia conflict has raised concerns over global energy supplies, especially in Europe which relies heavily on energy imports from Russia. Disruptions in energy supplies, such as a drop in oil and gas production from Russia, could cause fluctuations in global energy prices. This can have an impact on global economic stability and disrupt post-pandemic economic recovery efforts.

Thus, the escalation of the conflict between Ukraine and Russia has not only regional repercussions but also disrupts stability and sustainability in two major global issues of concern to the G20: food security and energy prices. This shows the urgency for G20 member countries to work together in addressing the conflict and seek solutions that promote global economic stability.

In addition, Indonesia is also faced with challenges in strengthening regional and global economic cooperation in facing the lingering impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has shaken the foundations of the global economy, resulting in recession and widespread uncertainty, and posed new challenges in terms of vaccine distribution and economic recovery.

Amidst this uncertainty, the Indonesian President has finally facilitated policy coordination between G20 member countries to support a rapid and sustainable economic recovery, while keeping in mind the growing inequality and other negative impacts of the pandemic.

Another challenge faced by Indonesia is promoting justice and inclusion in the global development agenda. Although progress has been made in some aspects of development, many countries are still marginalized and vulnerable to economic, social, and environmental inequality. Indonesian presidents must ensure that their voices are heard in the G20 forum and that the global policies adopted consider their needs and interests.

2. Literature Review

Foreign politics

In terms of how Indonesia handles the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, the concept of an active free foreign policy is often discussed. Not only neutral but foreign policy perspectives must also have a real impact on the crisis and relate to the foreign policy of the nation-state. This shows that other countries' policies have an impact on a country, whether it has a positive or negative impact. In terms of policy, the



national interest is very important in the decision-making process.

According to Morin et al. (2018), foreign policy is polysemy; some scholars consider that foreign policy consists of actions, reactions, or those that may be ad hoc or repetitive (Morin et al., 2018). While Perwita (2005) in his book explains, foreign policy is the direction of the state in dealing with other countries based on values, behaviors, directions, and goals to maintain, protect, and advance the country's national interests in the international arena (Perwita, 2005). As a result, each country has its own unique foreign policy and policy line. Policymakers use foreign policy to protect and advance national interests in the international arena.

According to Abidin (2019), the foreign policy includes policies, behaviours, and actions taken by a state in conducting relations with other countries, both in international organizations and other subjects of international law with the aim of achieving the interests of the state. Foreign policy can serve as a guideline for a country to do what it must do in relations with other countries to achieve its national goals (Abidin, 2019).

According to Mas'ood (1989), Foreign policy can be interpreted as a form of wisdom or action taken in relation to situations or actors that exist outside the borders of the State. Mas'ood further explained foreign policy carried out by the government of a country does aim to achieve the national interests of the people it rules even though the interests of a nation at that time are determined by who is in power at that time (Mas'ood, 1989).

National interests are permanent, consisting of geography, history, (economic) resources, partners, population, and ethnicity (Burchill, 2005). The national interest is considered very important for international politics, as seen from its classification, it is divided into two, the first is to involve policymakers' understanding of the national interest, which allows them to understand the goals to be achieved in a

country's foreign policy, which in turn forms the basis for their actions. The second part serves as a rhetorical tool that supports political actions and the legitimacy of states, helping to legitimize their actions.

The national interest becomes the main concept for describing, explaining, and assessing foreign policy. National interest is used as an interpretive tool in analysing strategies. Such a pattern will help decision-makers support their strategic goals. In strategizing, there are two components: the offensive component and the defensive component. The offensive component will design ideas to achieve goals and calculate policy successes and losses. The defence component serves as a plan to deter other countries if a country's interests are threatened, as well as a plan when defence fails (Sinaga, 2010).

During the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, Indonesia tried to create a safe zone by applying the principle of freedom in its foreign policy and paying attention to offensive and defence aspects. In the beginning, foreign policy meant the theory of actions or policies of a country towards other countries to achieve the interests of the state. National or national interests must be a policy consideration of Indonesia's attitude in responding to the Russia-Ukraine war. Frankel confirmed that the national interest is objective and related to the foreign policy of the country. It shows that the policies of other countries affect a nation, both positively and negatively. In terms of policy, the national interest is very important in the decision-making process.

Diplomacy concept

Diplomacy as one uses knowledge, reason, and wisdom to behave as opposed to aid relations between states, sometimes also relations between public authorities. In other words, diplomacy means behaving as opposed to commitments and obligations between countries to achieve peaceful relations.

From the eyes of idealists, diplomacy is carried out to achieve goals that exceed material achievements; It



serves to win over individuals and significantly affects each other's views and behaviour, so both parties must strike a balance and hope for the same qualities. Focus on countries that coexist peacefully, so the world needs innovative and smart negotiators to stop the desire to fight that causes world problems (Emilia, 2013).

According to Syahmin (2008), diplomacy is a political act and essential for global activities that are usually coercive and complex, by utilizing legislatures and global associations to acquire their interests through organizations. This is done as one of the drivers to advance the nation, increase participation, and spread influence on various countries in achieving national interests for each country. Even though diplomacy cannot be separated from various public interests, considering that diplomacy is very necessary for missions to achieve the public interests of a country (Syahmin, 2008).

It was later understood by Roy (1995), who stated that diplomacy is an agreement sought to secure and promote the public interest of another country and that is a point of wisdom and is considered a way of avoiding attack in ending the debate between countries. In other words, it implies that there is no conflict or end through savagery, a nation must measure its solidarity with its rivals (Roy, 1995).

Bilateral diplomacy is also a standard operating procedure in international relations where relations between countries are ongoing. Bilateral shows the basis of mutual diplomacy, namely equality. Bilateral diplomacy has significant advantages. The relationship between two countries can be specially established. It can meet the immediate interests of each country involved in the relationship. No other country ignores the two countries that have total control over them. Bilateral diplomacy must consider the regional and global context, but complete control does not mean complete freedom.

On the other hand, the concept of multilateral diplomacy refers to how to conduct foreign policy,

decided through diplomatic cooperation between three or more countries. Countries believe that cooperation is a profitable strategy. Compared to bilateral diplomacy, multilateral diplomacy focuses more on transactions. In the end, the person who negotiates bids and makes a deal (what is my advantage?), while the person who negotiates and makes an agreement (what are our advantages?). Essentially, this understanding of multilateral diplomacy is procedural; it has to do with the way negotiators conduct diplomacy, not the form or model of diplomacy which one of them refers to International Organizations such as the WTO and the G20 summit which is a multilateral way of conducting diplomacy.

3. Methods

This study used a literature review and qualitative research. In qualitative research, explicit and complex meanings or symbols from data are prioritized to be extracted, placed, interpreted, explained, and communicated. On the other hand, the literature study is a rigorous and systematic bibliographic research that involves acquiring bibliographic resources relevant to the research objectives, collecting information using literature methodology, and organizing and analysing results (Hardani et al., 2020).

Therefore, it can be affirmed that qualitative research techniques that use an interview approach and a literature study approach are data collection methods focused on finding written materials (Sundari et al., 2022); in this case, the G20 report was used as the primary data complemented by an in-depth onsite interview with the Ukrainian Ambassador and the Russian Ambassador, in May 2022. Due to informant in the context of this article is that both countries are currently embroiled in conflicts that affect global political and economic dynamics. Both have valuable insights into issues related to their conflicts, as well as their views on Indonesia's role as host of the G20 Summit.



While perspectives from other G20 member states or neutral parties can also make important contributions, focusing on these two ambassadors provides a deeper understanding of the conflict and how it affects the G20 Summit preparations and agenda. Furthermore, including perspectives from other G20 member states or neutral parties could be the next step in follow-up research to broaden the scope of the analysis and gain a wider perspective on the issues. This report examines Russia-Ukraine, the G20 Summit and the Challenges of the Indonesian Presidency. Therefore, the best method to achieve this research objective is to combine qualitative research with literature review.

4. Results and Discussion

"Recover Together, Recover Stronger" was chosen by Indonesia as the theme at the G20 Summit presidency in Bali for the first time and has high hopes regarding the good impact on post-pandemic economic recovery for countries included in the G20 forum. The theme of the G20 summit presidency carries Kawung, scrolls, mountain silhouettes in the form of plant tendrils, and red and white colours that show the country's flag, as a logo.

The presidency of the G20 Summit in Bali in addition to having an impact on the economy and cooperation, Indonesia also has its own challenges, namely with pressure from other countries that refuse to attend the G20 Forum. Vasyl Hamianin, Ambassador of Ukraine to Indonesia "The Ukrainian government itself supports the international sanctions imposed on Russia, so it will be more difficult for Russia to finance its war in the future. The end for Ukraine, of course, is that a peace agreement at the negotiating table can be reached soon (Yonarisman et al., 2022)."

But Indonesia is not only silent, but Indonesia's efforts also to reconcile Russia-Ukraine are one of the challenges that must be faced. Of course, the G20 event is not only the summit, but the process. There

are various events that are held before the summit. We know there are more than 150 events and Russia actively participates in these events, online or offline. There is a meeting of foreign ministers in July 2022 in Bali, and we have already confirmed. We are part of this process; Russia remains present at the G20 Forum despite being represented by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov (Komala et al., 2023). While President Zelensky could not attend the G20 summit, Ukraine could contribute significantly to all forms of cooperation, especially in terms of renewable energy and IT, which includes creative industries.

Indonesia also has a role to play in the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Indonesia as a country that adheres to and upholds the principle of free and active foreign relations, emphasizes its consistency with this principle in the Russian-Ukrainian crisis. Indonesia emphasized that the principle of free and active, principle here does not mean active neutrality, but also contributes both in the form of characterization and assistance for conflict resolution. This principle is not indicative of a neutral stance, but rather free to behave in accordance with national interests. The attitude taken by Indonesia is also not just following other countries, but rather an effort to voice the importance of respect for international law norms. Indonesia will also continue to encourage the use of force to be stopped so that all parties can resolve the conflict (Intania, 2022).

Previously, on April 28, 2022, Jokowi established communication with Putin. Putin also briefed Zelensky on the latest developments in Ukraine. Jokowi and Putin met at the Kremlin Palace on June 30, 2022, to talk about humanitarian issues and efforts to end hostilities between the two countries. Jokowi conveyed two important goals to Putin: first, encouraging him to open Ukrainian wheat export routes, and second, inviting Putin to attend the G20 Summit in Bali on November 15-16, 2022 (Strangio, 2022).

Through Jokowi, Indonesia invited Zelensky to the G20 summit so that the two countries could discuss



the agenda directly and negotiate under the direction of the G20 countries and in this way, Jokowi effectively spoke with Russia and Ukraine to reconcile the two countries (Zuhri, 2022). One of Indonesia's concrete actions to proactively resolve the Russia-Ukraine conflict is this action. This will depend on the security situation of Russia and Ukraine. Both asserted that a meeting between the two countries might take place at the G20 summit. Zelensky stated that this agenda could help end the war (Asmara, 2022).

At the G20 Summit, Indonesia also revealed that the war in Ukraine has affected the preparation and agenda of the G20 Summit in Indonesia. Issues such as global food security, logistics, and transportation are becoming more urgent in the context of the Ukraine conflict. Then when viewed from the global economic impact, the war in Ukraine not only affects Ukraine and Russia but also has a significant global economic impact. Economic sanctions imposed by several countries on Russia have triggered a rise in world oil and gas prices and disruptions in global supply chains (Yonarisman et al., 2022)

On the other hand, Russia claims that the global economic crisis is not caused by the current war or military operation in Ukraine, but because of the sanctions implemented and imposed to isolate Russia. Efforts to cut economic ties, financial ties, and dismantle the global logistics chain, and the world trading system, to punish Russia. This is what affects the world economy, and of course also politics (Yonarisman et al., 2022).

So far there is no economic basis for taking such steps, it is questionable: What is the goal? Is it to punish the Russians? Of course. But what about moves that seem to punish oneself and the economic system?

There is certainly some truth to this, that these measures have had a serious impact on the global economy. But the whole economic crisis did not stop with its impact only on Russia. World oil and gas prices are soaring, as are food supplies.

The Indonesian Presidency in 2022 finally brought various positive impacts to Indonesia such as a stable economy and politics and Indonesia's ability to defend itself during crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic, especially many foreign investors who finally believed to put some of their funds in various business sectors in Indonesia.

With an economic growth rate that finally reached 5% in 2018, this figure is quite convincing and utilized in the G20 forum optimally by Indonesia to open to investment and fresh ideas sourced from G20 member countries and see opportunities for cooperation in various fields, one of which is the economic sector that can open and create jobs. Economic and financial issues are very important in the current global situation. The hope is that what has been conveyed in the G20 presidency can be applied, because the priorities proposed by Indonesia include post-pandemic global economic recovery, strengthening the global health architecture, digital economic transformation, and sustainable energy transition. These are issues that are very important for the future development of the global economic and financial system (Yonarisman et al., 2022).

Despite the complicated geopolitical situation, both Ukraine and Russia expressed their desire to strengthen cooperation with Indonesia in various fields, including trade, investment, education, and technology. This shows that, despite tensions at the global geopolitical level, bilateral relations are still considered important and have the potential to develop further. If flashback at the Japan Summit in 2019, Indonesia emerged and proposed an idea that supports the development of the digital economy called "IDEA Hub" which was initiated to be a place for various ideas about business models for digital companies that have reached unicorn level in G20 member countries, having two focuses, namely Financial Inclusion, Sharing Economies, and Workforce Digitalization.



In addition to initiating the above ideas, in the Osaka Summit session, Japan 2019 Indonesia also finally expanded its business in the form of cooperation with India and South Korea such as infrastructure development cooperation plans, export-import activities, and related bilateral cooperation such as the Indonesia-Korea Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (IKCEPA) which resulted in several cooperation programs in the fields of industry and investment. Being one of the G20 member countries, Indonesia has received a lot of support, especially in the economic sector, where Indonesia has various ways to achieve its national interests. Activities obtained are bargaining with other countries and opening investment activities from other countries that are members of the largest economic forum in the world (Putri, 2020).

With the theme "Recover Together, Recover Stronger", Indonesia strives to improve the economic sector in several ways, for example by discussing the Exit Strategy to Support Recovery which aims to maintain and escort G20 countries in the post-pandemic recovery period. On the other hand, addressing the scaring effect of secure future growth became a hot discussion regarding the impact of the crisis on growing productivity, employment, and the financial sector as much as possible.

The Indonesian government has realized that with the development of technology that is increasingly advanced and developing, this has caused more and more digital currencies to begin to be traded to facilitate transactions and various other things (Bank Indonesia, 2021). The Ukraine conflict finally also highlighted those major challenges in international diplomacy and security, which are not only a concern in the context of the G20 summit, but also raise questions about the role of international bodies such as the United Nations and NATO in addressing the conflict and maintaining global peace. Ultimately, it shows that there is a need for adjustments in agendas and priorities in international forums such as the G20

summit in response to developing world events. This demonstrates the flexibility and adaptability of multilateral forums in responding to changing global challenges.

5. Conclusion

The conflict between Ukraine and Russia has posed new challenges for Indonesia as host of the G20 summit, forcing the country to navigate a sensitive and diverse foreign policy. Both Ukraine and Russia expressed their hopes and concerns about Indonesia's role in facilitating the G20 summit. Ukraine highlighted the need to adjust the agenda of the G20 summit to accommodate developing world events, while Russia stressed the importance of keeping the focus on global economic and financial issues.

Meanwhile, the challenges of the Indonesian presidency in managing global events affecting the G20 summit are also debated, with this article highlighting the complexities of diplomacy and security faced by Indonesia. This reflects the importance of finding the right balance between responding to pressing global issues, such as the Ukraine-Russia conflict, and maintaining the economic agenda and priorities of the G20 summit.

Overall, this article highlights the importance of prudent and responsive diplomacy to changes in world politics, as well as the need for international cooperation to address complex and often unforeseen challenges.

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