

PRABOWO'S INDEPENDENT ACTIVE FOREIGN POLICY ON PALESTINE AND ITS GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT. This study discusses the implementation of Indonesia's free and active foreign policy under President Prabowo Subianto concerning the Palestinian issue and its implications for Indonesia's global role. The principle of Indonesia's free and active foreign policy serves as the foundation for determining the direction of its foreign policy, particularly regarding the Israel–Palestine conflict. This research employs a qualitative method using Rosenau's Foreign Policy Analysis theory to analyze the domestic and international factors influencing Indonesia's foreign policy decisions, and interviews with experts. The findings indicate that President Prabowo reaffirmed his commitment to Palestinian independence through active diplomacy at the United Nations (UN), the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and bilateral meetings with major powers. This policy strengthens Indonesia's image as a middle power that contributes to global peace, although Indonesia's strategic position has not yet made it a dominant force in the Asian region. The implications of this policy are evident in Indonesia's enhanced bargaining position at the international level, its active role in the Islamic world, and the growing global recognition of Indonesia's position.

Keywords: Free and Active Foreign Policy; Prabowo Subianto; Palestine; Global Role

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of its independence, Indonesia's foreign policy has adhered to the principle of “free and active,” as stated in the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution and explicitly regulated in Law No. 37 of 1999 on Foreign Relations, particularly Article 3, which declares that Indonesia's foreign policy follows the principle of being free and active and is dedicated to the national interest. The term free means that Indonesia is not bound to any bloc or major power, whether in global political contexts or ideological alliances. Meanwhile, active signifies Indonesia's active role in promoting world peace, resolving international conflicts, and advancing justice and humanity (Hatta, 1953; Suryokusumo, 1999).

An active foreign policy can be defined as an approach in which a country not only reacts to international dynamics passively but proactively initiates, shapes, and engages in resolving global issues to create an external environment that aligns with its national interests and values (Hatta, 1953; Leifer, 1983). This concept emphasizes the agency of the state, which is manifested through constructive participation in international organizations, conflict mediation, the activation of economic diplomacy, and the advocacy of certain norms such as democracy, human rights, or peace. In the Indonesian context, this active role is interpreted as the mandate to “participate in implementing world order” as enshrined in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution, which translates into dynamic diplomacy—from being a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement and ASEAN to contemporary initiatives such as the Indo-Pacific

Cooperation Concept (Suryokusumo, 1999; Sukma, 2011). Therefore, conceptually discussing active foreign policy is crucial for understanding not only what Indonesia does on the global stage, but also why and how such active engagement is strategically constructed and executed.

As the President of the Republic of Indonesia inaugurated on October 20, 2024, Prabowo Subianto continues and reaffirms the implementation of the free and active foreign policy principle in his international policies. One of the clearest manifestations of this principle is reflected in Indonesia's stance toward the Palestine–Israel conflict, a protracted conflict that has lasted for more than seven decades and still lacks a permanent solution despite numerous UN resolutions, such as Resolution 242 (1967) and Resolution 338 (1973). In this context, Prabowo's administration demonstrates two key aspects of the free and active principle:

1. Free, by opening diplomatic and communication channels with all parties, including Palestine, the Islamic world, Israel, and even the United States as Israel's main security ally. This approach illustrates Indonesia's effort to maintain balance and avoid rigid alignment with any particular bloc, instead prioritizing humanitarian and peace interests.
2. Active, by taking concrete roles in various international forums. President Prabowo has openly expressed his support for Palestinian independence at the United Nations General Assembly and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). In his UN speech, Prabowo reaffirmed Indonesia's commitment to supporting a peaceful, just, and sovereign two-state solution

while calling for an end to violence against civilians in Gaza.

President Prabowo Subianto's free and active stance on the Israel–Palestine conflict has been evident since the beginning of his leadership. In his 2024 presidential inauguration speech, Prabowo emphasized that Indonesia has a moral and historical responsibility to support Palestinian independence. He stated that this position reflects the Indonesian nation's own experience of colonization and oppression, making it a duty for Indonesia to side with oppressed nations and fight for their independence.

“We hold firmly to our principle, the principle of being anti-colonial, because we have experienced colonization. We are anti-oppression, because we have been oppressed. We must show solidarity and defend the oppressed peoples of the world. Therefore, we support the independence of the Palestinian people.” — Presidential Inauguration Speech of President Prabowo Subianto, October 20, 2024 (Liputan6, 2024; Setneg.go.id, 2024).

Furthermore, during a bilateral meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron in Paris on May 28, 2025, Prabowo reaffirmed Indonesia's consistent stance in supporting peace between Israel and Palestine. On that occasion, he also conveyed that Indonesia, within the framework of its free and active foreign policy, must maintain communication with all parties, including recognizing Israel as a sovereign state, provided that Palestine achieves full independence.

“Indonesia believes that only the two-state solution, independence for the Palestinian nation, is the sole path toward true peace. Indonesia must also recognize Israel's existence as a sovereign state if Palestine gains independence.” Prabowo–Macron Joint Statement, Paris, May 28, 2025 (AntaraNews, 2025; Kompas, 2025).

A similar stance was reiterated by Prabowo in his address at the 80th United Nations General Assembly, where he stressed that the international community must not remain silent in the face of the suffering of the Palestinian people and the violations of international law they endure. Prabowo asserted that Indonesia firmly supports two sovereign states living side by side in peace, a free Palestine and a secure Israel.

“Only the two-state solution will bring true peace. We must have a free Palestine, but we must also ensure the safety and security of

Israel.” President Prabowo Subianto's Speech at the 80th UN General Assembly, New York, 2025 (AntaraNews, 2025).

President Prabowo Subianto's firm stance on the Palestinian issue, coupled with his friendly approach toward countries supporting Israel, should be viewed as a strategic step for Indonesia to emerge as a strong, moderate, and globally respected nation. Historically, the global political landscape has been divided into two poles: nations that have chosen to normalize relations with Israel, and those that fully support Palestine with a hardline stance against Israel. This polarization has long hindered the realization of genuine peace in Palestine.

Despite the policy explanations above, scholarly engagement remains limited if the analysis does not incorporate contemporary academic debates on Indonesia's foreign policy. Recent studies—such as those by Laksmana (2018), Anwar (2020), Rüländ (2022), and Putra (2023)—highlight Indonesia's evolving identity as an aspiring middle power, the recalibration of the “free and active” doctrine under Jokowi, and the growing importance of pragmatic diplomacy in a multipolar world. Yet, these works do not specifically examine how Prabowo's administration applies the free and active doctrine within the sensitive geopolitical arena of the Israel–Palestine conflict. This gap underscores the need for a systematic analysis of how Prabowo's foreign policy choices align with, diverge from, or transform earlier doctrinal interpretations.

This article contributes new insights by offering (1) a theoretical elaboration on the adaptation of the free and active doctrine under Prabowo within middle-power diplomacy frameworks, (2) an empirical mapping of Prabowo's diplomatic maneuvers related to the Palestine–Israel issue, and (3) a conceptual clarification of Indonesia's potential repositioning in global politics driven by this policy orientation. These contributions address a clear gap in current foreign-policy scholarship.

An important question arising from President Prabowo's position is whether the implementation of the free and active foreign policy principle has gained appreciation and support from the international community. Furthermore, it is worth examining whether this foreign policy has strengthened Indonesia's position on the global stage and revived its image as the “Asian Tiger” in international political affairs.

Based on the gap identified above, this study pursues two primary objectives: (1) analyzing the implementation of Prabowo Subianto's free and active

foreign policy in the context of the Palestine–Israel issue, and (2) assessing its geopolitical implications for Indonesia’s emerging role as a middle power in Asia and the Islamic world. These objectives ensure coherence between the research problem, conceptual gap, and subsequent analysis.

This study aims to comprehensively explain the implementation of Prabowo Subianto’s free and active foreign policy in the context of the Palestine–Israel issue and to analyze the geopolitical impact of such a policy on enhancing Indonesia’s strategic position at the international level. The research seeks to determine whether Prabowo’s version of the free and active foreign policy is not merely a normative slogan but a strategic instrument to reinforce Indonesia’s global identity and role as an influential middle power in Asia and the Islamic world.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical. This approach was chosen because the research aims to understand the meaning, orientation, and implementation of Indonesia’s foreign policy under President Prabowo Subianto concerning the Palestine–Israel issue in depth. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research emphasizes understanding socio-political phenomena based on the perspectives of the actors, the context, and the meanings embedded within them. In this context, the researcher seeks to examine how the principle of a “free and active” foreign policy related to the Palestinian issue is applied by the Prabowo administration and how this policy is perceived in the international political arena.

This approach is also relevant to the constructivist paradigm in International Relations studies, which emphasizes the role of ideas, identity, and national values, such as anti-colonialism and solidarity with Palestine, in shaping foreign policy (Wendt, 1999). This research is a library study. All data were obtained through an examination of various written sources, both primary and secondary, related to Indonesia’s foreign policy, the administration of President Prabowo Subianto, and the Palestine–Israel issue. As explained by Zed (2014), library research focuses on collecting data from literary materials such as books, official documents, journal articles, online news, and state speeches to construct strong conceptual arguments. The data sources consist of primary sources, including President Prabowo Subianto’s Inaugural Address (October 20, 2024), the Prabowo–Macron Joint Statement in Paris (May 28, 2025), President Prabowo Subianto’s Speech at

the 80th UN General Assembly (2025), Law No. 37 of 1999 on Foreign Relations, and the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution of Indonesia. The secondary sources include books, academic journals, and articles related to Indonesia’s foreign policy, such as Hatta (1953) *Mendayung di Antara Dua Karang*; Suryokusumo (1999) *Politik Luar Negeri Indonesia: Prinsip dan Dinamika*; Wendt, Alexander (1999) *Social Theory of International Politics*; Liputan6 (2024); Setneg.go.id (2024); AntaraNews (2025); Kompas (2025); and documents and reports from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), as well as an interview with Fahmi Salsabila, Chair of the Indonesian Society for Middle East Studies (ISMES).

To increase methodological transparency, this study applies explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria. Documents and news sources were included if they: (1) directly discuss Indonesia’s foreign policy or Prabowo’s statements related to the Palestine–Israel issue; (2) originate from credible sources such as state institutions, internationally recognized media, or peer-reviewed academic publications; and (3) fall within the temporal coverage of 2024–2025, the period in which Prabowo assumed office and issued key foreign-policy statements. Materials were excluded if they contained unverifiable claims, were opinion-based without factual grounding, or fell outside the specified timeframe.

The data collection technique was carried out through documentation studies by gathering data from official archives, government statements, state institution websites, and credible media sources. It also involved literature analysis by examining theories of constructivist international relations and the concept of middle power diplomacy, as well as speech and political statement analysis by examining President Prabowo’s speeches to identify the value orientations and foreign policy strategies. The data analysis techniques employed were content analysis and discourse analysis. Content analysis was used to identify messages, values, and meanings within official documents, speeches, and statements by President Prabowo related to the Palestinian issue (Krippendorff, 2018). Discourse analysis was used to understand how the “free and active” narrative is constructed within the global political context and how the international community responds to it (Fairclough, 2010).

The analytical workflow consisted of several steps. First, documents were systematically organized and coded using initial (open) coding to identify key categories such as “free and active,”

“two-state solution,” “pragmatic diplomacy,” and “middle-power identity.” Second, axial coding was employed to connect these categories into broader thematic patterns, including Indonesia’s normative identity, Prabowo’s diplomatic recalibration, and external perceptions of Indonesia. Third, thematic mapping was conducted to integrate findings from content analysis and discourse analysis, allowing the researcher to connect textual meanings (content) with discursive constructions (narrative framing). This integration enabled a more comprehensive interpretation of how Prabowo’s foreign policy is articulated and situated in global political discourse.

These two techniques help the researcher explore the relationship between ideological principles (free and active) and Indonesia’s diplomatic strategies and position on the global stage. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation by comparing data from various official sources such as speeches, news reports, legal documents, and academic publications. This technique aims to ensure the objectivity of the analysis and minimize interpretive bias (Moleong, 2019). The research was conducted in Jakarta through digital data collection and online archival research during the period of January–October 2025.

James N. Rosenau (1997), in *Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA)*, along with other scholars such as Graham Allison (1971) with his foreign policy analysis models (rational actor, organizational process, and bureaucratic politics), Charles F. Hermann (1990) who emphasized the dynamics of foreign policy change, and Valerie Hudson (2007) who expanded FPA by incorporating gender and individual behavioral dimensions, all contribute to understanding the complexities of foreign policy decision-making. Rosenau’s theory focuses on how and why states make foreign policy decisions, rather than merely on the outcomes. Some of his main ideas include:

1. Foreign policy is the result of a complex decision-making process involving individual actors (leaders), government institutions, and international environmental factors.
2. National interest serves as the primary foundation in the formulation of foreign policy.
3. The state’s fundamental values (such as ideology, constitution, or moral principles) influence the direction of foreign policy.
4. FPA seeks to explain the interaction between structure (the international system) and agency (political leaders) in determining foreign policy behavior.
5. Foreign policy is not a single action of the state

but rather the outcome of interactions between domestic and international factors.

In this research, the Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) theory is used to explain how Indonesia’s foreign policy under President Prabowo Subianto is formulated, influenced, and implemented based on national interests and the nation’s core values. FPA emphasizes the importance of understanding foreign policy through analysis of the actors, decision-making processes, and domestic and international factors that shape it (Rosenau, 1997). In the context of this study, the main actor in focus is President Prabowo Subianto as the highest decision-maker in foreign policy. Prabowo’s role is central because he not only determines Indonesia’s diplomatic stance on the Palestinian issue but also constructs Indonesia’s image as a moderate and influential state on the global stage.

The fundamental values underlying this policy are rooted in the principle of a “free and active” foreign policy as mandated by the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution and reaffirmed in Law No. 37 of 1999 on Foreign Relations. This principle stipulates that Indonesia shall not align itself with any major power (free), while at the same time actively contributing to the creation of world peace (active). National interest serves as the main dimension in applying the FPA theory. Prabowo’s foreign policy is directed toward strengthening Indonesia’s image and position in the international arena, maintaining solidarity with the Palestinian struggle for independence, while simultaneously preserving constructive diplomatic relations with Western countries. This approach reflects a balance between the moral idealism and the pragmatism of Indonesia’s foreign policy.

Moreover, domestic factors play a significant role in shaping foreign policy. Public support for the Palestinian cause, national political legitimacy, and the deeply rooted anti-colonial ideology within Indonesia’s national identity serve as driving forces for the government to uphold a pro-Palestinian stance in every international forum. At the international level, the dynamics of global geopolitics form an important context for Prabowo’s foreign policy. Indonesia faces the challenge of maintaining a balance between solidarity with the Islamic world and its strategic interests in fostering good relations with major powers such as the United States, the European Union, and countries that support Israel.

By employing the FPA approach, this study analyzes the extent to which Prabowo’s administration implements the “free and active” foreign policy principle in a realistic and adaptive

manner. This approach allows the researcher to assess whether Indonesia's diplomatic actions on the Palestinian issue truly reflect a consistent free-and-active political orientation while simultaneously strengthening Indonesia's position as a regional power and an influential actor on the global stage.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Prabowo's Diplomatic Stance on the Palestinian Issue: Strong Rhetoric as a Means of Domestic Legitimacy and Identity Formation

President Prabowo Subianto's stance on the Palestinian issue is evident from the consistency of his statements in both national and international forums. He has firmly and repeatedly expressed strong support for Palestinian independence while condemning the ongoing humanitarian tragedy in the region. Prabowo asserted that what has happened to the Palestinian people constitutes a form of modern oppression and colonialism that the global community must not tolerate (Liputan6, 2024). On multiple occasions, Prabowo has drawn parallels between the suffering of the Palestinian people and Indonesia's own historical experience of colonization and injustice over centuries.

In his inaugural speech as President of the Republic of Indonesia on October 20, 2024, he emphasized that Palestine must be supported and granted its independence (Setneg.go.id, 2024). This position has been consistently reiterated in several bilateral meetings with Western leaders, including his meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron in Paris on May 28, 2025, during which Prabowo reaffirmed the importance of the two-state solution and freedom for the Palestinian people (Kompas, 2025; AntaraNews, 2025).

Furthermore, in his address at the 80th United Nations General Assembly, Prabowo once again called for full international support for the Palestinian people and urged the world to take immediate action to end their suffering (AntaraNews, 2025). This position was further reinforced by an official statement from Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Assembly, reaffirming Indonesia's firm diplomatic support for Palestinian independence with clear and morally grounded language (Kemlu.go.id, 2025).

President Prabowo's firm statements on Palestine serve as a mechanism for building domestic legitimacy and affirming Indonesia's national identity as an anti-colonial nation, while also acting as an

instrument to project a moral image on the global stage.

The consistency of Prabowo's pro-Palestinian rhetoric, which equates Palestinian suffering with Indonesia's colonial experience, not only meets the expectations of a domestic public that strongly supports the issue (a factor of domestic legitimacy) but also strategically activates Indonesia's historical identity as a champion of decolonization. This aligns with the findings of Natalie Koch (2020) regarding the use of historical narratives in diplomacy to build moral authority. However, this study expands on that by demonstrating how the agency of a leader (Prabowo) actively utilizes this narrative as a foundation for more pragmatic diplomatic actions, thereby creating a "moral firmness" that is negotiable in relations with Western parties. This finding addresses the research objective of revealing the interaction between domestic drivers (identity, legitimacy) and international ones (image projection) in the pattern of Prabowo's foreign policy.

The Humanitarian Approach as an Instrumentalization of Soft Power for Strategic Influence

President Prabowo Subianto's foreign policy toward Palestine is reflected not only in political statements but also in concrete actions in diplomacy and humanitarian fields. One tangible form of this policy is Indonesia's commitment to strengthen relations with the Palestinian people through education and capacity-building programs. President Prabowo invited Palestinian youths to study in Indonesia by offering full scholarships, accommodation, and professional training in strategic fields such as engineering, healthcare, and international relations (Kemendikbud, 2025). This initiative represents Indonesia's concrete contribution to developing Palestine's human resources, with the hope of strengthening the foundation of a future independent Palestinian state (Kemlu.go.id, 2025).

Moreover, the Prabowo administration made history in Indonesia's humanitarian diplomacy by delivering direct aid to Gaza via air routes. For the first time, Indonesian military aircraft were allowed to enter Palestinian airspace to deliver humanitarian assistance directly to conflict victims (AntaraNews, 2025). This act demonstrated Indonesia's diplomatic courage and distinguished it from other Southeast Asian Muslim nations that typically channeled aid through third parties such as Egypt or international organizations (Kompas, 2025).

Prabowo also took an institutional step by appointing a deputy minister specifically tasked

with handling Islamic world affairs, including the Palestinian issue. The appointment of Anis Matta aimed to strengthen Indonesia's foreign policy coordination in the Middle East and reaffirm its position as a Muslim-majority country with a moral responsibility toward the Palestinian struggle (Setkab.go.id, 2025). In various statements, Anis Matta emphasized Indonesia's firm belief that Palestine must be free from occupation and enjoy full sovereignty as a nation-state (Kemlu.go.id, 2025).

Additionally, President Prabowo significantly increased the frequency of international engagements with leaders of Muslim-majority countries. He held strategic communications with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to strengthen cooperation on the Palestinian issue and promote peace in the Islamic world (CNNIndonesia, 2025; Anadolu Agency, 2025). These meetings symbolize Indonesia's active diplomacy aimed at restoring its central role in the Islamic world and the broader Asian region through an independent, active, and humanitarian-oriented foreign policy.

The scholarship initiatives and direct humanitarian aid to Gaza represent a form of soft power instrumentalization that transforms into strategic leverage, strengthening Indonesia's bargaining position both in the Islamic world and in the eyes of the international community, while also revealing the boundaries of conventional "free and active" policy.

Concrete actions such as direct air aid delivery and scholarship programs demonstrate Prabowo's agency in translating the "active" principle into innovative actions that go beyond verbal diplomacy. From an FPA perspective, this represents the interaction between the leader's desire to demonstrate leadership (leader agency) and the need to fulfill the national interest of enhancing Indonesia's status. Compared to studies on Indonesia's middle-power diplomacy by Vibhanshu Shekhar (2018), which focused more on ASEAN institutions, this finding indicates a shift towards a more direct and leadership-driven approach. This initiative expands the understanding of "middle power" by emphasizing the role of personal initiative and humanitarian diplomacy as tools for gaining strategic recognition.

Balancing Diplomacy: Indonesia's Collaboration with the West and Its Consistency on the Palestinian Issue

Despite his strong support for the Palestinian cause, President Prabowo Subianto has maintained positive diplomatic relations with key pro-Israel

nations, particularly the United States and France. This approach reflects the implementation of Indonesia's core principle of an "independent and active" foreign policy. In multiple forums, Prabowo has emphasized Indonesia's role as a bridge for dialogue between the Islamic world and Western countries to promote just and lasting peace in the Middle East (Kemlu.go.id, 2025).

Prabowo's diplomatic closeness to Western countries is evident through a series of state visits to the United States, France, and several European nations historically known as Israel's allies. During his visit to Washington D.C. in April 2025, for example, Prabowo held bilateral talks with the U.S. President on defense and regional security cooperation. In that meeting, Prabowo reaffirmed Indonesia's position in support of the two-state solution as the path toward lasting peace in the Middle East (WhiteHouse.gov, 2025; CNNIndonesia, 2025).

A similar stance was expressed during his visit to Paris on May 28, 2025, where he met with President Emmanuel Macron. In their joint statement, Prabowo reiterated that Indonesia views Palestinian independence and Israel's security as two essential conditions that must coexist to achieve genuine peace in the region (Kompas, 2025; AntaraNews, 2025). This balanced diplomatic message illustrates the practical implementation of Indonesia's independent and active foreign policy, as mandated by Law No. 37 of 1999 on Foreign Relations (UU No. 37/1999).

Thus, President Prabowo's approach is not one of extreme alignment but rather a policy that positions Indonesia as a mediator and moral power actively contributing to international peace. This stance reinforces Indonesia's position as a respected moderate nation, both within the Islamic world and among Western countries (Suryokusumo, 1999; Hatta, 1953). Prabowo continues to maintain open diplomatic communication with all parties—including Palestine, the Islamic world, Israel, and the United States—reflecting Indonesia's effort to uphold balance and prioritize humanitarian and peace-driven interests over rigid bloc politics.

Prabowo's balancing diplomacy functions as a deliberate status-seeking strategy, positioning Indonesia not as a passive neutral party, but as an active mediator indispensable to both sides, thereby increasing Indonesia's strategic value in the eyes of all parties.

Prabowo's ability to maintain constructive relations with the US and France while vocally supporting Palestine reflects the pragmatic application of "free and active." The FPA explanation views this as the result of interaction between

systemic constraints (global polarization) and the leader's agency in leveraging those constraints for national gain. This finding simultaneously reinforces and challenges the traditional discourse on "free and active." It reinforces the argument that this principle remains relevant (Laksamana, 2021), but also challenges overly normative interpretations by showing how the principle is used in a highly calculated and personal manner by a leader to gain leverage. Indonesia's position as a "bridge" trusted by the OIC to convey a message to the US is empirical evidence of this strategy's success, which directly contributes to the research objective of identifying specific trends in Prabowo's foreign policy.

International Impact: Consolidating Indonesia's Position as a Trusted Middle Power

President Prabowo Subianto's consistent implementation of Indonesia's independent and active foreign policy has enabled the country to play a strategic role between the two major poles of global politics—the Islamic world and the West. His balanced approach between moral idealism and diplomatic pragmatism strengthens Indonesia's image as a moderate nation that upholds justice, humanity, and international peace (Kemlu.go.id, 2025).

For the Islamic world, Prabowo's leadership has elevated Indonesia's standing. Strong support for Palestinian independence, humanitarian assistance to Gaza, and active engagement with leaders of Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar have reestablished Indonesia as a moral and political force within the global Muslim community (Anadolu Agency, 2025; Al Jazeera, 2025). Indonesia has also enhanced its economic and defense cooperation with Middle Eastern nations, including the establishment of the Indonesia–Saudi Arabia Bilateral Consultative Forum on humanitarian and regional peace issues (Kemlu.go.id, 2025).

On the other hand, Indonesia's relations with the Western world have remained positive. Through an active and independent diplomatic approach, Prabowo has been able to establish strategic cooperation with the United States, France, and the European Union without abandoning solidarity with Palestine. Indonesia has even received international appreciation for demonstrating a balanced stance between humanitarian principles and regional geopolitical interests (Reuters, 2025; Kompas, 2025). This positive image strengthens Indonesia's reputation as the largest democracy in the Islamic world and as a middle power that plays an influential role in maintaining global stability (Beeson, 2008).

Thus, it can be concluded that the implementation of an active and independent foreign policy under Prabowo's era brings several important implications for Indonesia's position in the global arena, such as the enhancement of Indonesia's diplomatic role in issues concerning the Islamic world, particularly in advocating for Palestinian independence and cross-regional humanitarian cooperation, the strengthening of Indonesia's image as a moderate and sovereign nation, capable of standing between the interests of the Western and Islamic worlds without losing its national identity, the increase of Indonesia's geopolitical influence in the Asian and Middle Eastern regions, positioning itself as a mediator and guardian of regional peace, and the growing international trust in Indonesia's diplomacy, reflected in Prabowo's invitations to various global forums such as the G20 Summit and the UN General Assembly to speak about world peace (UN.org, 2025).

Indonesia's free and active foreign policy under President Prabowo's leadership is thus not only a continuation of the fundamental principles of Indonesia's foreign policy, but also a strategic transformation that positions Indonesia as a key actor in the international political arena of the 21st century (Rosenau, 1997; Hatta, 1953). The free and active diplomacy implemented by President Prabowo Subianto has made Indonesia one of the strategic actors in the Islamic world, while also maintaining its positive image in the eyes of the Western world.

For example, Prabowo attended the Sharm El-Sheikh Peace Summit in Egypt on October 13, 2025, an international forum aimed at stopping the violence in Gaza and seeking a fair and peaceful solution for the Palestinian people. The invitation reflected Indonesia's status as a key country deemed essential in the Middle East peace process (State Secretariat, 2025; Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2025). On that occasion, Indonesia represented Southeast Asia's Muslim nations, actively voicing support for the two-state solution to the Israel–Palestine conflict, while affirming that both Palestinian independence and Israeli security are equally essential for achieving genuine peace (The Australian, 2025; Pacis, Parahyangan Catholic University, 2025).

Indonesia's participation in the forum has brought tangible positive impacts. First, it opened a new diplomatic avenue for Indonesia to reaffirm its position as an international mediator and a major nation with global influence. Second, it strengthened Indonesia's image as a moderate country capable of engaging in dialogue with various parties, both the

Islamic world and Western powers, without losing its national identity. Third, it consolidated Indonesia's position as a middle power with significant relevance in the global arena, particularly on issues of humanity and world peace (Rosenau, 1997; The Australian, 2025).

Under the leadership of President Prabowo Subianto, the Indonesian government successfully obtained a special permit from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the construction of the Indonesia Hajj Village in Mecca. This strategic project was directly approved by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) during his meeting with Prabowo in July 2025. The complex will be located approximately 400 meters from the Masjid al-Haram and will become the only large-scale worship complex granted exclusively to a Southeast Asian country (Kompas.com 2025; Antara News 2025). The construction of this Hajj Village will cover an area of 80 hectares and is projected to accommodate up to 200,000 Indonesian Hajj and Umrah pilgrims annually (Kompas.com 2025). This permit demonstrates Saudi Arabia's high level of trust in Indonesia, which is recognized as having the world's largest Hajj management capacity.

From an economic and diplomatic perspective, the facility will be managed by the Hajj Financial Management Agency (BPKH) in collaboration with national private entities such as Danantara Indonesia, ensuring that the economic value generated from the organization of the Hajj continues to circulate within the country. This initiative is expected to reduce Hajj logistical costs, strengthen the sharia hospitality industry, and create new job opportunities for Indonesian workers (Bisnis.com 2025). The policy illustrates how President Prabowo's independent and active foreign policy is not solely oriented toward political diplomacy but also embodies a strategic economic-religious dimension. Moreover, Indonesia presents itself as a moderate Muslim-majority nation with significant influence in the Islamic world, while maintaining strong relations with global partners such as Saudi Arabia. This aligns with the mandate of the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution, which calls for Indonesia to "participate in the establishment of a world order based on freedom, lasting peace, and social justice" (1945 Constitution, Preamble, fourth paragraph).

Indonesia's firm stance on the Palestinian issue was once again clearly demonstrated through the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) forum. During the OIC Extraordinary Session in Jeddah on August 25, 2025, the Indonesian delegation asserted that Israel's acts of violence in Gaza constituted

genocide against humanity and urged the Islamic world to take more concrete diplomatic measures to stop the aggression (Kemlu.go.id 2025). Indonesia's strong statement subsequently led the OIC to appoint Indonesia as the official envoy to deliver the Islamic world's position to U.S. President Donald Trump, urging him to pressure Israel to halt its military operations in Gaza and to immediately implement the two-state solution. In a diplomatic meeting in Washington in September 2025, Indonesia's envoy conveyed the OIC's principal message calling on the United States to play an active role in ending the genocide in Gaza and supporting the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state (The Australian 2025; Al Jazeera 2025).

This appointment demonstrates that the independent and active foreign policy of President Prabowo Subianto's administration is not only recognized in the Asian region but also trusted by the Islamic world to serve as a strategic communication bridge between East and West. Indonesia has emerged as a moral and political mediator, advocating for justice and global peace in accordance with the mandate of the 1945 Constitution's Preamble, which emphasizes the nation's commitment to "participate in the establishment of a world order based on freedom, lasting peace, and social justice."

Prabowo Subianto's independent and active foreign policy has been acknowledged not only by the Islamic world but also appreciated by the Western world, particularly by strong supporters of Israel such as Donald Trump. During the Gaza Peace Conference in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on October 13, 2025, Trump described Prabowo as an "extraordinary figure from Indonesia" and publicly praised Indonesia's role as a great nation performing remarkable work for Middle East peace (Setkab.go.id 2025; ANTARA 2025). Furthermore, at a multilateral meeting on the Middle East held at the United Nations on September 23, 2025, Indonesia was invited by Trump to be one of the keynote speakers. Trump lauded Prabowo's speech as "powerful and energetic... you did a great job," drawing admiration from world leaders (Setkab.go.id 2025). Such recognition demonstrates that Indonesia's diplomacy under Prabowo's leadership has successfully embodied the principle of an independent and active policy, remaining free from major power blocs while being active in global diplomacy, thereby earning acknowledgment from world superpowers.

Recognition from the United States was not merely diplomatic rhetoric but reflected Indonesia's strategic position as an important partner in global humanitarian and peace issues. Accordingly, this

approach has brought several positive impacts for Indonesia, including the strengthening of its international reputation, broader diplomatic access, and greater opportunities for strategic cooperation with Western nations. The independent and active foreign policy pursued by President Prabowo Subianto has had a significant positive impact on Indonesia's economy and international image. The strong diplomatic relationship between Prabowo and U.S. President Donald Trump has become one of the key factors delivering strategic advantages for Indonesia.

Trump's praise of Prabowo in various international forums demonstrates recognition of Prabowo's leadership as a resilient and adaptable figure in global politics. This personal closeness subsequently bore fruit in Indonesia's successful economic diplomacy. During trade negotiations with the United States in 2025, Indonesia managed to reduce the initially proposed import tariff from 32 percent to 19 percent. This tariff reduction was a historic achievement, as many other countries at the time were instead subjected to higher U.S. tariffs (Reuters 2025). Moreover, as part of the trade agreement, Indonesia also secured preferential rights to export several key commodities such as palm oil, rubber, and cocoa. In return, the Indonesian government committed to purchasing U.S. energy and agricultural products of substantial value, as a means of strengthening strategic partnerships (The Guardian 2025).

This policy has produced tangible economic benefits. With lower import tariffs, Indonesian products have become more competitive in the U.S. market, driving an increase in exports and boosting domestic industrial growth (Lundgreen's Investor Insights 2025). Furthermore, the success of this diplomatic effort has enhanced Indonesia's positive image on the international stage as a nation capable of balancing relations between the Islamic world and the Western world, without compromising the principle of an independent and active foreign policy that underpins Indonesia's international stance.

Prabowo's diplomacy has consolidated Indonesia's position as a "sought-after middle power," where recognition and trust from both global political poles (the Islamic world and the West) are simultaneously translated into diplomatic, economic, and institutional capacity-building advantages.

Recognition from Donald Trump, permission to build the Indonesia Hajj Village from Saudi Arabia, and the role as an OIC envoy demonstrate that Prabowo's diplomacy has successfully converted a moderate image into tangible political capital. From

an FPA perspective, this is the optimal result of the interaction of all levels: leader agency, the national interest for recognition and prosperity, domestic legitimacy, and the dynamics of a fragmented international system. This finding is consistent with the literature on middle-power entrepreneurship (Dzavid, 2023), which emphasizes initiative and niche diplomacy, but this study provides a new nuance by showing how, in a highly polarized conflict like Israel-Palestine, it can yield concrete bilateral gains (such as the reduction of US tariffs). This indicates substantive novelty beyond policy documentation, namely the causal mechanism of how balanced moral diplomacy can produce material rewards and measurable status enhancement.

Fahmi Salsabila, Chair of the Indonesian Society for Middle East Studies (ISMES), assesses that President Prabowo's foreign policy orientation—remaining grounded in the principle of an independent and active foreign policy while building strategic relations with various influential countries at the global level—provides Indonesia with greater flexibility and a wider room for maneuver in international affairs. This approach is considered to contribute to strengthening Indonesia's position within the global political economy structure while simultaneously enhancing the bargaining power of Indonesia's cultural diplomacy. Indications of this strengthening are reflected in the increasing recognition and positive perceptions of the international community toward Indonesia's role. Nevertheless, Fahmi emphasizes that domestic political dynamics that have not yet fully stabilized in the post-presidential election period may still pose limiting factors, as internal instability can affect the consistency, credibility, and effectiveness of the implementation of Indonesia's foreign policy.

Thus, President Prabowo's success in implementing an independent and active foreign policy has not only strengthened Indonesia's position in the Islamic world but also demonstrated effective diplomacy in building relations with Western countries. This aligns with Indonesia's constitutional objective to contribute to global peace and maintain world order.

CONCLUSION

Indonesia's independent and active foreign policy under President Prabowo Subianto has strengthened the country's strategic position by balancing principled support for Palestine with pragmatic engagement toward major global powers, thereby reinforcing Indonesia's role as a moderate and

influential middle power. This study finds that the policy effectively enhances Indonesia's diplomatic credibility, aligns with the nation's long-standing foreign policy doctrine, and contributes to broader international recognition without yet elevating Indonesia to the level of a dominant regional power. While structural constraints from other rising middle powers and the continuing dominance of the United States and China limit Indonesia's global leverage, the consistent and innovative application of this foreign policy approach retains significant potential for future strategic advancement. Future research may further explore how Indonesia can expand this diplomatic framework to emerging global issues beyond the Palestinian question.

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