
**ECONOMY VERSUS SECURITY: COMPETITION BETWEEN CHINA AND THE UNITED STATES
IN ELEVATING PARTNERSHIP WITH INDONESIA**

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ABSTRACT

China and Indonesia celebrated their 70 years of diplomatic relations in 2020. Both countries were celebrating throughout the year as a symbol of the close relationship. China and Indonesia relation has gone further through a comprehensive strategic partnership that has brought benefits to both countries. Through Xi Jinping's visit to Indonesia, there has been an enhancement from the level of strategic partnership in 2005 to the comprehensive strategic partnership in 2013. In the other side, the security relations between the United States and Indonesia are also getting stronger. The U.S. desire to build closer security engagement in Southeast Asia was welcomed positively by Indonesia. The study wants to examine how the competition between China and the United States to establish partnerships with Indonesia using the strategic partnership analysis framework from Strüver (2016). The study shows that security relations between China and Indonesia lag behind economic cooperation and are hampered by the bleak history of security relations between the two countries and China's aggressive behavior in the South China Sea. Consequently, China has not utilized the framework of comprehensive strategic partnership in security and military cooperation with Indonesia. In contrast, The United States enjoys a friendly security relationship through several military exercises and the frequent sending of Indonesian military officers to study at U.S. military education institutions. However, the economic relations between the United States and Indonesia is not in the same pace with security relations. Finally, both China and the U.S. have used their main leverages in building influence in the region, especially in Indonesia.

I. Introduction

China and Indonesia have significantly close relations. China sees Indonesia, Malaysia and Russia as countries that have similarities in viewing the issue of territorial sovereignty. The closeness of China and Indonesia is evidenced in 1999 when China was likely to veto a U.N. Security Council resolution that would approve the dispatch of international forces in East Timor (INTERFET) in 1999 if Indonesia requested it (Kent, 2013).

China's relationship with Indonesia is vital since Southeast Asia is China's "back yard" (Zhimin & Armstrong 2010). However, the relationship between China and Indonesia was not smooth and was judged in a "troubled" framework (Sukma 1999), especially in 1965 (Liu 2012). Along with improving relations between China and Indonesia through "strategic partnership," there are "security challenges" (Sriyanto 2018) that need to be overcome by the two countries. Among them is the modernization of China's military power (Cheung 2010), which will have security implications in the Southeast Asia (Keller 2011), in which Indonesia is positioned.

As well as China, the United States views Indonesia as an important partner in Southeast Asia, given Indonesia's strategic location in the world's busiest maritime route and the status of the third largest democratic country with the largest Muslim population in the world. The United States was also a country that supported Indonesia's independence from Dutch colonization and one of the early countries that established diplomatic relations with Indonesia in 1949. Relations between the United States and Indonesia later in a crossroads during the old order under the leadership of Sukarno who lean more to China and the Soviet Union (US Department of State 2022).

When Indonesia was under President Suharto, relations with the United States developed to a close and stronger ties. Although Indonesia is one of the founding countries of the non-aligned movement, The US considers Indonesia as a partner in anti-communism sentiment, especially in the Southeast Asian region. The United States and Indonesia then improved their relationship under a comprehensive partnership in 2010 and then improved again to a strategic partnership in 2015 (US Department of State 2022).

With China's economic and military rise in recent decades and the close relationship between the US and Indonesia, this paper wants to examine how the competition between China and the US in fostering relations with Indonesia within the framework of partnerships, especially in the economic and security fields.

II. METHOD

Partnership: a theoretical framework

Currently, definition of comprehensive strategic partnership is relatively fluid. The concept stems from a partnership described as a "diplomatic instrument that allows for hedging against all eventualities while allowing for the common pursuit of mutual interests" (Nadkarni 2010, in Strüver 2016). A partnership-based relationship is a closer relationship when compared to ordinary bilateral relations and has goals to be achieved by both countries.

Furthermore, strategic partnerships are often associated with partnerships that deal with traditional security issues rather than economic relations. However, a strategic partnership is more than that. Strüver explained that there are four characteristics of a strategic partnership, namely:

1. A structured framework for collaboration that goes beyond regular diplomatic interaction
2. Characterized by a high level of flexibility
3. Willingness to commonly pursue joint interests and mutual goals and leaving aside more conflictive issues
4. A stronger behavioral disposition and are rather process-oriented

A definition of comprehensive strategic partnership was clearly stated in 2004 by the leader of China, Wen Jiabao. He said that comprehensive means "all-dimensional, wide-ranging, and multi-layered. It covers economic, scientific, technological, political, and cultural fields, contains both bilateral and multilateral levels, and is conducted by both government and non-governmental groups". While strategic is "it means that the cooperation should be long-term and stable". Wen Jiabao added that "it transcends the differences in ideology and social system and is not subjected to the impacts of individual events that occur from time to time". Lastly, partnership means "the cooperation should be equal-footed, mutually beneficial and win-win". He also added that "the two sides should base themselves on mutual respect and mutual trust, endeavor to expand converging

interests and seek common ground on the major issues while shelving differences on the minor ones" (Zhongping and Jing 2018).

From the meaning of comprehensive strategic partnership above, we can determine that the partnership is at the highest level.

The Dynamics of China – Indonesia Diplomatic Relations

China and Indonesia began to establish diplomatic relations on April 13, 1950. It should be noted that before successfully establishing diplomatic relations, the initiative to establish relations came from the Indonesian side. At first, China did not respond positively and was reluctant to recognize Indonesia's independence as a sovereign country. This less positive and less friendly relationship can be seen from Liu Shaoqi's criticism in 1949 which stated that President Sukarno was a puppet of western imperialism and called for a national liberation movement (including in Indonesia) under the people's liberation army led by the communist party. In general, the Chinese government considers that Indonesia is an errand boy for imperialism (Sukma 1999).

Diplomatic relations since 1950 have become a new chapter for the two countries. However, there has also been some dynamics in the relationship between the two countries caused by the Chinese embassy's support for the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). Support from PRC government was given to ethnic Chinese in Indonesia who were involved in the PKI and their efforts to bring down the Indonesian government. China did that by providing a sanctuary for Alimin, a PKI leader in 1950's. China also sympathized with and offered protection to Tan Ling Djie, an ethnic Chinese who was also a PKI theorist (Sukma 1999).

Relations between China and Indonesia improved in 1953 by the dispatching of the first Indonesian ambassador and conclusion of the first Sino-Indonesian trade agreement. In addition, the two countries agreed to sign a dual nationality treaty in 1955. Trade relations improved rapidly after that and the two countries supported each other in international fora, one of which was supporting China to regain Taiwan and Indonesia to have West Papua (Sukma 1999). Indonesia's efforts to seize West Papua from the Dutch colonialists are considered the same as China's attempts to take Taiwan (Formosa), which is currently under western occupation.

In 1959, there was tension where China intervened in Indonesia's domestic policies related to resettlement for overseas Chinese in Indonesia. China issued a policy for overseas Chinese in Indonesia to oppose resettlement policy and called for overseas Chinese to return to mainland China. However, China finally ceased the policy of inviting back to the mainland because China had difficulty integrating overseas Chinese from Indonesia into Chinese society. In addition, the approach is costly and socially intricate (Sukma 1999).

Relations enhanced once more when China discussed Indonesia's 'the perpetual Sino-Indonesian friendship' in 1961 and offered economic assistance and support for West Papua to Indonesia. In the same year, President Sukarno visited China. Liu Shaoqi as vice chairman of the CCP, praised Sukarno for his role in promoting the great project of bridging the friendship between China and Indonesia. China and Indonesia at this time have similar views on imperialism and third world countries. China also greatly supports the campaign carried out by Sukarno in the new emerging forces (NEFOS or newly independent states) against old-established forces (OLDEFO or The United States and USSR). China became Indonesia's strongest ally when Indonesia declared the Jakarta-Beijing axis in August 1965. As another campaign to fight against the new imperialism by western countries, Indonesia previously has withdrew its membership from the United Nations (U.N.) due to Indonesia's disappointment over Malaysia's membership in the security council.

The relationship then deteriorated after the coup attempt against Sukarno in September 1965. The armed forces, especially the Army, believed that China had supported the failed coup. Various anti-China sentiments carried out by the Indonesian people through mass actions followed the incidents. In 1967, the red guard in China reciprocate the actions in Indonesia. They staged anti-Indonesian demonstrations, vandalized, and burned the Indonesian embassy in Beijing. The Chinese government also condemned the Indonesian government and expressed support for the revolutionary effort against the fascist dictatorship of the Indonesian government in power (Sukma 1999). After the reciprocal action to expel diplomats from the two countries, Indonesia declared the freeze of diplomatic relations in October 1967. In response, China then proclaimed the suspension of all ties with Indonesia.

Almost two decades later, a signal to normalize relations appeared in 1985 through a statement by Foreign Minister Wu in his stopped over in the Philippines for a journey to visit Indonesia. He stated that China had no interest to support communist insurgency and interfere the Philippines'

internal affairs. When Foreign Minister Wu finally visited Indonesia to commemorate thirtieth anniversary of Bandung Conference, similar answer was given to answer press interview. Wu said that although China has maintained relations in moral nature with communist parties, it would not make the relations as a caused to interfere other countries internal affairs (van der Kroef 1986). A similar statement came from Hu Yaobang, Secretary-General of the CCP, who said that the CCP had no ties to communist groups in Indonesia when he visited Australia in the same year. It is clear that the normalization came firstly from the Chinese side. To the Indonesian side, there were also strong encouragements from the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to immediately establish trade relations with China (Sukma 1999).

The normalization was finally agreed in February 1989 when Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen met with President Suharto on the sidelines event of Emperor Hirohito's funeral in Japan (L.A. Times Archive 1989). Based on information from Indonesian officials, this normalization was possible because the Chinese side could provide assurances that China would not maintain relations with the PKI or its remnant supporters (Williams 1991). The initiative to meet China and Indonesia in Japan also came from China.

On August 8, 1990, China and Indonesia officially reopened diplomatic relations through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Resumption of Diplomatic Relations. In the MoU signed by Foreign Minister Ali Alatas of Indonesia and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen of China, the two countries agreed to make the Dasa Sila Bandung Conference and China's Five Principles of Peaceful Co-Existence as the basis for the normalization of relations (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia n.d.).

However, there was no statement that China will not support communist parties in Indonesia in the MoU. Instead, its stated that both countries do not recognize dual citizenship. Therefore, Chinese who live in Indonesia and have chosen to be Indonesian citizens, would no longer have Chinese citizenship and vice versa. This clause possibly cancelled the treaty between the two countries on dual citizenship in 1955 which was considered to be favourable on China (Williams 1991).

Interestingly, the MoU clearly stated China's appreciation to Indonesia's recognition of one-China policy that PRC as the sole legal government of China and that Taiwan is an integral part of China.

The MoU also limit the relations of Indonesia and Taiwan only in economic and trade relations of non-governmental nature (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia n.d.).

The US – Indonesia Stable Relations?

There are several issues that plagued the relations between The United States and Indonesia. In 1958, the United States was once accused of trying to weaken Sukarno's deemed pro-communist government, through its support of the universal people's resistance separatism group (PERMESTA) in the Moluccas. That year, the Indonesian armed forces arrested the pilot of a B-26 bomber, Allen Pope, that bombarded an air base in Ambon. Allen Pope was tried and accused of being part of a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operation in Indonesia with a variety of document evidence (Bakti, Mengko and Siregar 2018).

Relations between the United States and Indonesia were in a declining situation when the Indonesian military was found to have committed gross human rights abuses by shooting at demonstrators in East Timor in 1991. The United States then imposed an embargo on the sale of military equipment since 1994 as well as halting various military cooperation such as the International Military Education and Training (IMET) (Hart and McRae 2015) which made Indonesia has to turn to Russia for the acquisition of various military technologies

Nevertheless, in general, relations between the United States and Indonesia are in atmosphere of close and stable cooperation. The United States and Indonesia share democratic values and have a warm relationship in promoting stability, peace, and security in the region. Indonesia likely appreciated the U.S.'s support in tackling domestic terrorism in Indonesia as well as Indonesia's appreciation for the US's assistance and support during the Tsunami in Aceh in 2004. The warm bilateral relationship was also demonstrated by the US by providing support to Indonesia for membership in the G-20. In contrast, Indonesia also provides support to the US for America's participation in the East Asia Summit (EAS) (Hart and McRae 2015).

III. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

China – Indonesia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership: An Economic Direction?

The relationship between China and Indonesia increased to more than an ordinary bilateral relationship, starting with the two countries' agreement to build a China-Indonesia strategic partnership since April 26, 2005. The agreement was marked by a state visit by President Hu Jintao to Indonesia. President Hu Jintao met with President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and suggested that the strategic partnership focuses on seven aspects: more exchange in high-level visits, improving cooperation on economy, security, and disaster relief. They agreed to promote relations between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), cooperation in East Asia, and improving collaboration among developing nations (Xinhua News Agency 2005).

China and Indonesia view that strategic partnership is mutually beneficial cooperation. To improve the implementation of the strategic partnership, in 2010, both countries agreed to a plan of action, took various concrete steps, and promoted pragmatic cooperation.

The high-level meeting also reflected the closer relationship in Premier Wen Jiabao's visit to Indonesia in April 2011. Meeting with President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the two leaders expressed their satisfaction with the action plan to implement a strategic partnership and various positive developments in bilateral economic relations. The two countries also agreed to strengthen relations through visits by leaders between the two countries and increase the strategic dialogue mechanism.

In addition to various commitments to enhance economic, trade, investment and maritime cooperation, the two countries also agreed to maintain dialogue and improve collaboration through defense and security consultation mechanisms. Both countries view it is essential to enhance defense and security strategic relations to overcome traditional and non-traditional security challenges. This will be done through joint exercises, maritime security cooperation, defense

industry cooperation, and exchanges in non-traditional security cooperation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia 2011).



Fig 1. Number of China's partner countries in Asia (1996–2019)

Source: Liu 2021

In October 2013, President Xi Jinping visited Indonesia. President Xi and President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) agreed to upgrade the bilateral relations to a comprehensive strategic partnership and issued the Future Direction of China-Indonesia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (fmprc.gov.cn.). The Chinese government said that this comprehensive strategic partnership will be the direction for the future of relations between China and Indonesia and will be a milestone for the two countries' history. President Xi also presented 21st-century maritime silk road (MSR) notions in front of the parliament of Indonesia after conveying the idea of a silk road economic belt in Kazakhstan the previous month. It is clear that Xi Jinping visit was a historic moment for China and Indonesia and how Indonesia regarded as an important country for China and and its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Worth to mentioned that President Xi Jinping was also the first foreign leader and the first Chinese leader to speak in the Indonesian parliament.

The signing of the comprehensive strategic partnership is one of President Xi Jinping's approaches since he led China. In 2014, President Xi once conveyed at the CCP Central Conference by stating, "China will develop a distinctive diplomatic approach befitting its role of a major power" (Liu 2021). In its implementation, since President Xi Jinping took the lead, there has been an increasing number of strategic partnerships carried out by China. In the six years from 2013 to 2019, there has been an increase of 13 strategic partnerships between China and other countries. It can be

calculated that every year China signs two strategic partnerships and shows China's hard work under President Xi to achieve China's various interests as a major power.

A. Structured Framework with High-Level Flexibility

President Xi and President SBY also witnessed the signing of various cooperation documents in the economic, trade, financial, fishery, space, and tourism fields. Through this supreme partnership, China followed up by holding multiple meetings and dialogues between high-ranking officials of the two countries. For example, Premier Li Keqiang's meeting with President SBY, Sun Chunlan's visit (a member of the Political Bureau of the CCP Central Committee), General Chang Wanquan's visit (State Councilor and Defense Minister), Yang Jiechi's visit (State Councilor) who held talks with the coordinating minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs of Indonesia. In addition, there was a visit by Wan Gang (Minister of Science and Technology/Vice Chairman of the CCP Central Committee) and a visit by Wang Yi (Foreign Minister) to Indonesia. The document's signing is evidence that the strategic partnership is a structured framework. However, at the same time, there is a characteristic of flexibility seen from various levels of officials in various fields who can follow up on the agreement.

Through the previous strategic partnership, China achieved rapid growth in economic and trade cooperation likewise with the direct investment. However, through a higher level of comprehensive strategic partnership, China could boosted cooperation with Indonesia in various fields. For example, through Indonesia's China-Indonesia Integrated Industrial Park Five Year Development Program. China has also enhanced its bilateral currency swap arrangement with Indonesia. Both countries also accomplished various positive improvements in the cooperation of energy, resources, infrastructure, manufacturing, and agriculture.

In defense, maritime and space cooperation, China said that this cooperation is progressing rapidly. In 2013, the fifth defense and security consultation were held and set up a mechanism for the Navy-to-Navy Cooperation Talk and held its first meeting.

The two countries agreed to advance cooperation in the maritime sector by signing an MOU by the Ministry of Agriculture of China and the Ministry of Maritime and Fisheries of Indonesia. Cooperation is also established in the field of outer space and an agreement to use outer space for

peaceful purposes. In education, social and culture, there is an increase in cooperation—for instance, many Indonesian studying more in China and an a growing number of teachers to teach in Indonesian education institution. Thus, closer cooperation in the field of tourism were part of the attention as Indonesia wanted to attract more Chinese tourists to Indonesia (fmprc.gov.cn).

The expansion into various areas of cooperation that has not been done before and how the cooperations were then structured, is the realization of a structured framework with a high level of flexibility.

B. Pursuing Joint Interest and Leaving Aside Conflictive Issues

After almost a decade of implementing the comprehensive strategic partnership between China and Indonesia, China was able to increase its investment in Indonesia to become the second-largest investor. In 2020, the value of investment was reached 4.8 billion USD. China and Indonesia also signed an MOU to develop four more economic corridors in Indonesia: North Sumatra, North Kalimantan, Bali, and North Sulawesi (Unair News 2021).

In the context of the BRI, China is an investor in the Jakarta-Bandung high-speed railway and constructing a comprehensive economic corridor and the "two countries, twin parks" project. For Indonesia, the Jakarta-Bandung high-speed train will be the first high-speed train operated by this country. Indonesia also benefited from China's vaccine development that Indonesia can buy ever more vaccines to deal with COVID-19. China also supports Indonesia to build a regional vaccine production centre with China (Xinhua Net 2021). The COVID-19 vaccine collaboration with China has helped Indonesia accelerated the implementation of COVID vaccinations for 208 million Indonesians, in order to achieve the 70 percent rate in December 2021.

Although these various collaborations indicate the closeness of China and Indonesia, it should be remembered that China and Indonesia have multiple issues related to the nine-dash line, militarization of artificial islands in the South China Sea, history of Indonesian communist coup attempt tensions, and freezing of diplomatic relations with Indonesia. The China Coast Guard is often considered by the Indonesian side to have entered the Natuna waters in the South China Sea. This issue has become a heated issue for the Indonesian public and has made the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs repeatedly send protests to China.

Indonesia also has its concerns about the rise of the Chinese military. Although there has never been a statement from the Indonesian side that China is a threat to Indonesia, the Indonesian Minister of Defense, Prabowo Subianto, once said that China would tremble to see the Arrowhead-type frigate patrolling Natuna (detik.com 2021). Indonesia has also built and upgraded a number of military infrastructures on Natuna Island. In fact, President Joko Widodo has been on a warship in the South China Sea as a message to China that Indonesia is ready to defend its rights in in North Natuna Sea. These things show that China and Indonesia have serious security issues and can be a challenge for relations between the two countries.

Another challenge is that the Indonesian public also perceives China as a threat to the Indonesian economy through the swift investment and flow of Chinese workers to Indonesia (Jawa Pos 2021). It is said that Indonesia can be too dependent and suffer losses because of the imbalance in the benefits that Indonesia could get. One of the issues is that China continues to bring much labour from China and being considered an effort to resettle Chinese citizens to Indonesian territory in the labor scheme.

In addition, the Indonesian Muslim population, as the largest Muslim population in the world in one country, is also paying close attention to the issue of the Uyghur ethnic group in Xinjiang. There are suspicions that China is carrying out various discriminations and human rights violations against fellow Muslims in Xinjiang (Kementerian Sekretariat Negara RI 2018). Even though China has invited journalists and Indonesian Islamic religious leaders to visit, China's label as a violator of human rights remains attached to some Indonesian Muslims.

However, through a comprehensive strategic partnership agreement, various issues that have the potential to become conflictual issues can be ruled out. The partnership continues as no significant challenges from the public can disrupt the partnership. Shared interests, goals for prosperity, and profit, seem to remain the glue between China and Indonesia relations despite some protest and of suspicions that could potentially harm the partnership.

The comprehensive strategic partnership is the functioning of the strong commitment of the two countries and will only work well if the process and progress can continue. On the other hand, comprehensive partnership agreement may become just a paper document without any meaningful accomplishment if there is no strong will and follow up through an ongoing process. Therefore, it

is applicable to say that strategic comprehensive partnership has the character of a stronger behaviour nature and are rather process-oriented.

Thus, the prospects for the sustainability of the comprehensive strategic partnership since President Xi Jinping signed it in 2013 remain bright. The strong partnership between China and Indonesia in various strategic fields and at multiple levels amid different challenges in security issues, threat perception, and socio-culture has not stopped the comprehensive strategic partnership.

However, it must be acknowledged that the challenges of security issues, particularly in the South China Sea and the rise of China's military, have made China-Indonesia military relations run at a slower pace compared to the progress made in the economic, trade and investment sectors. China is undoubtedly lagging behind the United States in military cooperation relations with Indonesia. This is understandable because Indonesia's military relationship with China was colored by the assessment of the armed forces (especially the Indonesian Army) that China had supported the PKI and Communism in Indonesia (Williams 1991). Therefore, more proactive steps to take the initiative need to be taken by defense institutions and the Chinese armed forces to reach the same level as in economic relations, trade, investment, and other close cooperation between China and Indonesia.

The US – Indonesia Strategic Partnership: Security Direction

According to a release from the White House, since 2010 the relationship between The US and Indonesia has been at the level of comprehensive partnership which is a joint commitment between President Obama and President SBY. The partnership will advance cooperation on broader issues in the areas of politics and security (democracy and human rights), economics (trade and investment), defense, education, science and technology, energy, health, and other areas. This comprehensive partnership was officially declared by the presidents of the two countries in Jakarta in November 2010 (Office of the Press Secretary The White House 2010). President Obama and SBY hope that the comprehensive partnership will be the foundation for the expansion of trade and investment cooperation between the two countries.

Economic wise, the US is not a strongest partner for Indonesia. From 2010 to 2014 America became the third largest source of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Indonesia (Hart and McRae 2015). However, in 2020, America is no longer in the top three FDI sources in Indonesia.

Singapore, China, Hong Kong, Japan, and Malaysia were the five largest sources of Indonesian FDI in that year (Badan Koordinasi Penanaman Modal 2020). The US ranked fifth in Indonesia's FDI with a value of 0.8 billion USD in 2022 after Singapore, China, Hong Kong, and Japan (Trading Economics 2022).

Economic cooperation between the two countries takes place in several sectors such as investment, market access, and infrastructure. Agreements on investment and trade have been initiated since 1996 which later developed in 2010 into investment agreements, agricultural technology and investment forums, and commercial dialogues between the US and Indonesia. In 2012, the two countries also signed an infrastructure development agreement. Hart and McRae (2015) describe the economic relationship between America and Indonesia as a combination of strife and familiarity, in which America often imposes an agenda of liberalization, freedom of market access, and highlights discriminatory and corrupt policies in Indonesian economic realm. A range of conditions imposed by the United States subsequently impact on the lack of positive progress of trade and investment relations between the United States and Indonesia in Indonesia.

The US and Indonesia then raised the level of partnership from a comprehensive partnership to a strategic partnership in 2015. This strategic partnership has a focus on promoting values such as support for UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea), freedom of navigation, respect for the EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone) within the framework of the so-called rules-based international order in the Southeast Asia region and the South China Sea (Burgess 2023).

Unfortunately, economic relations between the US and Indonesia are limited when compared to the potential of the two countries. According to CSIS's analysis, some obstacles to the implementation hampered due to the relations are more bureaucratic and did not advance the strategic agenda. In addition, there is a possibility that after the leadership of President Obama and SBY ends, President Trump and Jokowi do not have the interest or focus to develop this partnership. In contrast, partnerships in defense and security have yielded more positive results. The United States is considered more successful in enhancing security partnerships with Southeast Asian countries, including with Indonesia (Natalegawa 2018).

The United States and Indonesia have a longstanding relationship in the security sector, particularly through the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program provided

by the U.S. to train the Indonesian officers and soldiers. According to Inkiriwang, IMET is a foreign policy tool from the US as one of the ways that is considered effective in spreading communism in various regions. Through the program, Indonesia is considered dependent on the US in doctrine and tactics (Inkiriwang 2020). However, due to Indonesia's military allegation of human rights violations in 1991, The US suspended the IMET program from 1992 to 2005. The freezing military relations ultimately disrupted Indonesia's defense capability in line with the embargo on military equipment and disrupted bilateral relations within the security sector. The Indonesian Air Force was among severely impacted as the embargo hinders the air force to fully maintain the workhorse of F-5E and F-16 jet fighters acquired from The US (Gindarsah and Priamarizki 2021).

Relations between the two countries began to improve along with the threat of terrorism facing the two countries. By the Americans, Indonesia was involved in the Regional Defense Counterterrorism Fellowship Program. The Americans also provided financial support for the establishment of Special Detachment 88 (DENSUS 88) in Indonesian police institutions (POLRI) formed as a response to the 2002 Bali bombing. The tsunami in Aceh in 2004 was also paved the way for the reopening of military cooperation between the two countries. The US finally lifted the embargo of IMET and opened opportunities for Foreign Military Financing and Foreign Military Sales (Hart and McRae 2015).

The US also provides notable promotion for security sector reforms in Indonesia. This was marked by the visit of Secretary of Defense Robert Gates in 2008 who recognized the progress of military reforms in Indonesia. Three years after that, the security cooperation relationship became closer with the cooperation between the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Indonesian Police for counterterrorism, as well as anti-narcotics cooperation between the two countries' drug agencies (Hart and McRae 2015).

The American side stated that in 2011 there were 150 military cooperation activities between the two countries which later increased to 170 in 2012. These activities include joint exercises, personnel exchanges, visits by military personnel in various fields including humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, maritime security, and peacekeeping operations. In addition, there is a large-scale annual program of a war exercise under the name "Garuda Shield" which has been

taking place since 2012. The Garuda Shield annually organized by personnel of the Indonesian armed forces (TNI) and The United States Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM).

In 2022, the scale of the Garuda Shield exercise increased to “Super Garuda Shield (SGS)” involving 2000 Indonesian military personnel and 2000 military personnel from the US. The exercise also involved militaries from 12 other friendly countries. This large-scale exercise demonstrates that Indonesia is a vital strategic partner for The US and serve as a message that Indonesia's support for a free and open Indo-Pacific (Bramasta 2022). In 2023, The SGS was held on August 31 – September 13, with Indonesia, US, Australia, Japan, Singapore, and the United Kingdoms as participant (Puspen TNI 2023). According to the US Department of Defense, the step-up term from Garuda Shield to Super Garuda Shield is a showcase of expanding partnership and alliance between Indonesia and The US which then involving more countries as participants and observers (US Department of Defense 2023). The 2024 SGS will be held in August or September with 14 initial participants and observers. Meanwhile, until 2024, China’s People Liberation Army (PLA) only participated Garuda Shield only in 2012 and 2013 (Yahya and Rastika 2022).

To commemorate the 75th anniversary of the relationship between the United States and Indonesia, the two countries agreed to elevated the level of relations to a comprehensive strategic partnership in 2024. The status upgrade is an effort by the two countries to deepen relations in the defense and economic sectors (Nababan and Hadi 2023). Since 2021, the trade balance between the United States and Indonesia has begun to experience significant growth compared to the previous year (Kementerian Perdagangan RI 2023). Although the US and Indonesia's trade has begun to show positive signals, investment sector still yet to improve. In 2022, the US rank sixth largest investor after Singapore, China, Hong Kong, Japan, and Malaysia as the top five countries for investors in Indonesia (Annur 2023).

In contrast to the economic and investment sectors, through the 2024 comprehensive strategic partnership, the United States has reaffirmed its commitment to supporting Indonesia's military modernization (Nababan and Hadi 2023). The United States considers Indonesia to be the largest military engagement partner with various training and security programs offered and commitments

to facilitate the acquisition of sophisticated defense equipments from the United States for the Armed Forces of Indonesia.

IV. CONCLUSION

The implementation of the comprehensive strategic partnership between China and Indonesia since Xi Jinping era shows that the relationship between China and Indonesia can be said to be more than an ordinary bilateral relationship. The various sectors of cooperation that have been carried out (all-dimensional, wide-ranging, multi-layered) indicate that Indonesia for China is an essential partner to achieve mutual benefits (equal-footed and win-win). The importance of China to Indonesia today is marked by Indonesia's friendly policy towards China, Indonesia's commitment to the One China Principle, and support for China's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The China-Indonesia comprehensive strategic partnership also confirms the character of cooperation that puts aside various conflictual challenges and focuses on efforts to achieve mutual interests and benefits.

On the other hand, the United States also views Indonesia as a vital partner in security issues such as counterterrorism, combating illegal drugs, promoting stability and peace in the region through the free and open Indo-Pacific, and maritime security. Indonesia leverages close security cooperation with the The US as the development of Indonesia's military capabilities is benefited from the doctrines and tactics developed by the the US military. In addition, Indonesia has been relying modern and sophisticated defense equipment from the western and the US technologies, especially for the Air Force and Navy. Closer ties with The US became an important prerequisite for obtaining such a variety of high-tech and advanced materials. Unfortunately, The US has not made Indonesia a major investment destination country due to the discriminatory policy issues, corruption, market access, and human rights issues which become obstacles to the closer economic ties between the United States and Indonesia.

From the competition of China's strategic partnership versus The US towards Indonesia, it can be concluded that China and Indonesia's partnership in the economic realm is more conspicuous than the security relationship. On the other hand, the United States' ongoing partnership with Indonesia has been dominating in the security sector. As the US remains the sixth investor in Indonesia's FDI, it seems that security and defense may always be the main sectors.

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