

Indonesia's Palestine Policy under Contemporary Foreign Policy Constraints: Public Opinion, Humanitarian Diplomacy, and International Law

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Abstract

Indonesia has historically expressed strong political and humanitarian support for Palestinian self-determination. However, contemporary international politics creates complex challenges for Indonesia's Palestine policy, particularly concerning diplomatic relations, multilateral institutions, humanitarian assistance, and domestic public expectations. This article examines Indonesia's contemporary Palestine policy through the interaction between foreign policy, public opinion, humanitarian diplomacy, and international law. Using normative legal and foreign policy analysis, the study evaluates Indonesia's diplomatic positions, international legal commitments, humanitarian initiatives, and domestic political discourse. The article argues that Indonesia's Palestine policy is shaped not only by state interests but also by constitutional values, public expectations, and the influence of civil society. The study proposes a framework for understanding Indonesia's Palestine diplomacy as a combination of normative foreign policy and humanitarian engagement. Particular attention is given to the role of international law in legitimizing diplomatic advocacy concerning civilian protection, self-determination, and humanitarian access. The article concludes that Indonesia can strengthen the credibility of its Palestine policy by integrating consistent legal principles with measurable humanitarian diplomacy and multilateral engagement.

[Secara historis, Indonesia telah menyatakan dukungan politik dan kemanusiaan yang kuat untuk penentuan nasib sendiri Palestina. Namun, politik internasional kontemporer menciptakan tantangan kompleks bagi kebijakan Indonesia terhadap Palestina, khususnya menyangkut hubungan diplomatik, lembaga multilateral, bantuan kemanusiaan, dan harapan publik domestik. Artikel ini mengkaji kebijakan Indonesia terhadap Palestina kontemporer melalui interaksi antara kebijakan luar negeri, opini publik, diplomasi kemanusiaan, dan hukum internasional. Dengan menggunakan analisis hukum normatif dan kebijakan luar negeri, studi ini mengevaluasi

posisi diplomatik Indonesia, komitmen hukum internasional, inisiatif kemanusiaan, dan wacana politik domestik. Artikel ini berpendapat bahwa kebijakan Indonesia terhadap Palestina dibentuk tidak hanya oleh kepentingan negara tetapi juga oleh nilai-nilai konstitusional, harapan publik, dan pengaruh masyarakat sipil. Studi ini mengusulkan kerangka kerja untuk memahami diplomasi Indonesia terhadap Palestina sebagai kombinasi kebijakan luar negeri normatif dan keterlibatan kemanusiaan. Perhatian khusus diberikan pada peran hukum internasional dalam melegitimasi advokasi diplomatik terkait perlindungan warga sipil, penentuan nasib sendiri, dan akses kemanusiaan. Artikel ini menyimpulkan bahwa Indonesia dapat memperkuat kredibilitas kebijakan Palestinya dengan mengintegrasikan prinsip-prinsip hukum yang konsisten dengan diplomasi kemanusiaan yang terukur dan keterlibatan multilateral.]

Keywords: Indonesia, Palestine, foreign policy, humanitarian diplomacy, international law

Introduction

Indonesia's policy toward Palestine occupies an unusual position within its foreign-policy architecture because it combines historical identity, constitutional values, international law, humanitarian concern, and domestic political expectations. Support for Palestinian independence has survived changes of government and variations in Indonesia's external strategic environment. The persistence of this position is partly rooted in Indonesia's anti-colonial diplomatic identity, particularly the legacy of the Asian-African Conference and the principle that colonial domination is incompatible with international justice. Recent scholarship confirms that the historical legacy of Sukarno continues to provide symbolic and ideological resources for contemporary Indonesian diplomacy toward Palestine (Kirani and Larasati 2024). Other studies similarly characterize Indonesian policy as an expression of normative foreign policy rather than merely a product of religious solidarity or short-term strategic calculation (Medina, Darmawan, and Yulianti 2025). This historical continuity matters because it gives Palestine a degree of exceptional durability within Indonesia's foreign-policy discourse.

Yet continuity should not be mistaken for policy simplicity. Indonesia operates in an international environment characterized by strategic competition, institutional fragmentation, economic interdependence, and competing diplomatic expectations. As a middle power, Jakarta generally seeks to avoid exclusive alignment while maintaining sufficient diplomatic autonomy to cooperate with multiple actors. Research on Indonesia's international leadership demonstrates that its foreign-policy role is subject to competing interpretations concerning whether Indonesia should act primarily as a regional leader, normative advocate, mediator,

or pragmatic middle power (Jemadu and Lantang 2021). The Palestinian issue exposes this tension particularly clearly. Indonesia seeks to defend Palestinian self-determination while maintaining working relationships with major powers, participating in multilateral institutions, and preserving diplomatic space for humanitarian and peace initiatives. Consequently, Palestine policy cannot be evaluated only by asking whether Indonesia supports Palestine; it must also be examined through the question of how that support is operationalized under structural constraints.

The contemporary context following the escalation of violence in Gaza after October 2023 has intensified this challenge. Indonesian diplomacy has involved statements in international forums, engagement with the United Nations and Organization of Islamic Cooperation, humanitarian assistance, diplomatic communication, and efforts to promote ceasefire and civilian protection. Research on Indonesian diplomacy during the recent conflict identifies multilateral diplomacy, shuttle diplomacy, public diplomacy, and humanitarian diplomacy as interconnected instruments rather than isolated activities (Heriamsal and Manurung 2024). Other research emphasizes the importance of parliamentary and societal actors in reinforcing the country's Palestine advocacy. The resulting picture is therefore one of a multi-actor foreign-policy ecosystem in which the executive branch remains central but does not possess exclusive control over the meaning or legitimacy of Palestine policy.

Domestic public opinion constitutes another important constraint and source of support. Indonesian civil society organizations, religious groups, youth movements, universities, and humanitarian organizations have demonstrated sustained solidarity with Palestine. Research specifically examining Indonesian grassroots movements argues that protests, petitions, advocacy campaigns, and public mobilization can influence the political environment within which official Palestine policy is formulated (Sofea and Fawzy 2024). More recent research likewise finds that Indonesian public solidarity became particularly visible after the Gaza escalation, although participation remains uneven across social groups and institutional networks (Aswar and Munzilin 2025). This indicates that public opinion should neither be treated as a simple command mechanism nor dismissed as politically irrelevant. It constitutes a legitimacy environment that shapes the costs and opportunities of foreign-policy choices.

The international legal dimension provides a further layer of analysis. Indonesia's support for Palestine is not merely rhetorical because it can be articulated through principles of self-determination, prohibition of territorial acquisition through force, civilian protection, humanitarian access, and respect for international humanitarian law. Indonesia's diplomatic advocacy before international institutions demonstrates the use of legal language as a source of normative authority. Studies of Indonesia's advocacy at the International Court of Justice show how legal arguments, moral claims, and diplomatic rhetoric can be combined to strengthen international persuasion (Rosadi 2025). The importance of

law is therefore both substantive and strategic: international legal principles define standards that Indonesia invokes, while legal consistency can enhance the credibility of Indonesia's diplomatic position.

Despite substantial literature on Indonesia and Palestine, an analytical gap remains. Existing studies often examine historical foreign policy, diplomatic instruments, humanitarian action, public opinion, or legal arguments separately. Less attention has been devoted to explaining how these dimensions interact under contemporary constraints. This article addresses that gap by conceptualizing Indonesia's Palestine policy as a form of normative pragmatism, in which normative objectives remain relatively stable while diplomatic instruments are adjusted to changing domestic and international circumstances. The article argues that the effectiveness of Indonesia's policy should therefore be assessed not simply through the intensity of political statements but through the coherence between legal principles, diplomatic strategy, domestic legitimacy, and measurable humanitarian outcomes.

Literature Review and Theoretical Frameworks

The analysis begins from the literature on normative foreign policy. Normative approaches reject the assumption that foreign policy is determined exclusively by material interests and emphasize the role of ideas, values, identities, and international norms in shaping state behavior. In Indonesia's case, anti-colonialism and support for self-determination constitute enduring elements of diplomatic identity. Studies of Indonesian foreign policy toward Palestine identify this normative dimension as an important explanation for the continuity of Indonesian support across different administrations (Saragih 2019; Esperanza and Sukri 2023). The normative perspective is particularly useful because Indonesia's position toward Palestine often persists even when the immediate material benefits of such advocacy are difficult to identify.

The second theoretical foundation is the concept of the independent and active foreign policy doctrine. The doctrine does not require neutrality or withdrawal from international politics. Instead, it provides political space for Indonesia to formulate positions independently while actively contributing to international problem-solving. The Palestine issue demonstrates the operational significance of this doctrine because Indonesia has sought to participate in international institutions, cooperate with diverse partners, and advocate Palestinian independence without formally becoming part of a military or geopolitical bloc. Recent studies describe Indonesia's Palestine diplomacy as involving bilateral, multilateral, and public diplomacy simultaneously (Faathima et al. 2025). This supports the interpretation that “active” foreign policy is manifested through diplomatic engagement rather than ideological isolation.

A third framework is the two-level understanding of foreign policy. Foreign-policy decisions are shaped simultaneously by international pressures and domestic political environments. Putnam's classic two-level-games approach is useful in

explaining why governments must reconcile international bargaining with domestic political acceptability (Putnam 1988). Applied to Indonesia, the framework suggests that Palestine policy is negotiated at two interconnected levels. Internationally, Indonesia must consider diplomatic coalitions, major-power relationships, multilateral institutions, and legal constraints. Domestically, it must respond to public expectations, civil society advocacy, religious organizations, parliamentary politics, and humanitarian movements. Public opinion does not automatically determine policy, but it can expand or narrow the government's politically feasible range of action.

Humanitarian diplomacy provides the fourth conceptual pillar. Humanitarian diplomacy may be understood as the use of diplomatic engagement to secure humanitarian objectives, including access, protection, assistance, and support for vulnerable populations. It differs from conventional political diplomacy because its legitimacy is closely associated with humanitarian principles and needs-based assistance. Indonesian humanitarian engagement with Palestine demonstrates that humanitarian action can function simultaneously as assistance and foreign-policy practice. Research on Indonesian humanitarian organizations identifies the importance of cooperation among civil society, religious organizations, and humanitarian institutions in translating solidarity into practical assistance (Andriansyah 2024). This suggests that humanitarian diplomacy should be examined as a bridge between normative commitment and operational foreign policy.

Finally, international law is treated not simply as a set of legal obligations but also as a normative resource in diplomacy. The right of peoples to self-determination, the prohibition of aggression, international humanitarian law, and international human rights standards provide Indonesia with principles through which its diplomatic position can be articulated. This legal framing is important because political advocacy becomes more credible when it is connected to generally applicable rules rather than exclusively to bilateral sympathies. The challenge, however, is maintaining consistency. A state that invokes international law selectively risks weakening the normative authority of its foreign policy. Indonesia's credibility therefore depends on demonstrating that its Palestine policy forms part of a broader commitment to civilian protection, territorial integrity, self-determination, and international legality.

Methods

This research employs a qualitative normative-analytical method combining normative legal analysis with foreign-policy analysis. The normative component examines constitutional principles, international legal norms, diplomatic commitments, and legal concepts relevant to Palestinian self-determination and civilian protection. The foreign-policy component examines how those norms are translated into diplomatic behavior under domestic and international constraints. This combined method is appropriate because the research question concerns both

what Indonesia is legally and normatively committed to and how those commitments are operationalized through foreign-policy instruments.

The study relies on secondary scholarly literature, official legal documents, diplomatic statements, international institutional materials, and peer-reviewed or academically published studies available through 2025. The literature was selected according to substantive relevance to four analytical dimensions: Indonesia's foreign-policy identity, domestic public opinion and civil society, humanitarian diplomacy, and international law. Studies that merely describe the Palestine conflict without addressing Indonesia's policy or one of these dimensions were not prioritized. This selection strategy allows the research to remain focused on Indonesia rather than reproducing general literature on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

The analysis proceeds through thematic interpretation rather than statistical coding. Evidence is organized around the relationship between normative commitments and policy instruments. Particular attention is given to instances in which Indonesian policy demonstrates continuity of principles but variation in diplomatic methods. Public statements, multilateral engagement, humanitarian initiatives, and civil-society activities are therefore treated as interconnected components of foreign-policy practice. This approach also makes it possible to identify tensions between domestic expectations and international diplomatic constraints.

The research does not claim that Indonesia possesses unlimited capacity to influence the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Such an assumption would overstate the capabilities of a middle power. Instead, the analysis evaluates policy effectiveness according to realistic indicators: consistency of diplomatic positions, capacity to mobilize coalitions, contribution to humanitarian access and assistance, use of international legal mechanisms, and ability to maintain domestic legitimacy. The central methodological premise is that a foreign policy can be normatively ambitious while remaining instrumentally constrained. Evaluating both dimensions simultaneously provides a more accurate assessment of Indonesia's Palestine policy.

Results and Discussion

A. Normative Continuity and the Strategic Meaning of Palestine in Indonesian Foreign Policy

Indonesia's Palestine policy demonstrates unusually strong normative continuity. From the Sukarno era through the administrations of successive presidents, Palestinian self-determination has remained closely associated with Indonesia's anti-colonial identity and conception of international justice. The significance of this continuity extends beyond historical symbolism. Foreign-policy identities influence how governments interpret international events and determine which issues receive sustained diplomatic attention. Research on Sukarno's 1955 Asia-Africa Conference speech shows that Palestine was incorporated into a

broader anti-colonial narrative that continues to influence contemporary Indonesian diplomatic discourse (Suprianto, Hidayat, and Supendi 2025). The historical legacy therefore operates as a repertoire of political legitimacy rather than merely as diplomatic nostalgia.

The durability of this position also distinguishes Indonesia from states whose Palestine policies fluctuate primarily according to short-term strategic calculations. Indonesia has consistently supported Palestinian independence while avoiding formal recognition of Israel. This position allows Jakarta to maintain a normative distinction between support for Palestinian rights and hostility toward a particular population. The distinction is important because a credible foreign policy should avoid transforming opposition to state policies into antagonism toward ethnic or religious communities. Indonesian diplomacy has generally framed the issue around independence, self-determination, humanitarian protection, and international law. Such framing gives the policy a broader normative foundation than religious solidarity alone.

Nevertheless, normative continuity creates an expectation problem. Because Indonesian society and diplomatic elites have developed a strong historical narrative around Palestine, governments may face political pressure when diplomatic behavior appears insufficiently assertive. Public expectations can therefore become a constraint on diplomatic flexibility. Sofea and Fawzy demonstrate that grassroots activism and public opinion form part of the domestic environment shaping Indonesia's Palestine stance (Sofea and Fawzy 2024). The government cannot simply disregard this environment without risking a legitimacy deficit. At the same time, foreign policy cannot be reduced to public preference because diplomatic decisions involve information, bargaining, institutional constraints, and long-term strategic calculations.

The resulting pattern can be described as normative pragmatism. Indonesia maintains relatively stable normative objectives while adapting its instruments to changing circumstances. Under different administrations, the emphasis may move between multilateral advocacy, bilateral engagement, humanitarian assistance, peace initiatives, or public diplomacy, but the underlying commitment to Palestinian self-determination remains recognizable. This interpretation avoids two opposite errors: treating Indonesian policy as purely idealistic or reducing it to strategic opportunism. Indonesia's Palestine policy is better understood as an attempt to preserve normative identity while maximizing the practical instruments available to a middle power.

B. Public Opinion, Civil Society, and the Domestic Foundations of Palestine Diplomacy

Public opinion constitutes an important but indirect determinant of Indonesia's Palestine policy. The strongest evidence concerns the persistence of societal solidarity. Religious organizations, humanitarian groups, universities, youth networks, and civil-society organizations have repeatedly mobilized

demonstrations, fundraising, public campaigns, and advocacy. Research on Indonesian solidarity movements finds that such mobilization contributes to the domestic political environment surrounding Palestine policy (Sofea and Fawzy 2024). This does not establish a simple causal relationship in which public opinion dictates diplomatic decisions. Rather, it demonstrates that policymakers operate within a social environment where Palestine has substantial symbolic and emotional importance.

The political significance of this environment becomes clearer when foreign policy is understood through Putnam's two-level-games framework. Government officials must negotiate internationally while maintaining a domestic "win-set" capable of sustaining policy legitimacy (Putnam 1988). In the Palestinian context, strong public sympathy can increase the domestic cost of diplomatic ambiguity. A government that adopts an overly cautious position may face criticism from civil society and political groups, while a government that adopts highly confrontational rhetoric may reduce its diplomatic flexibility. The challenge is therefore to convert domestic solidarity into constructive foreign-policy instruments rather than allowing public pressure to produce purely symbolic politics.

The Indonesian case also demonstrates that public opinion is mediated by civil-society institutions. Religious organizations are particularly influential because they possess established networks, moral authority, and organizational capacity. Humanitarian campaigns conducted by Islamic organizations have transformed public solidarity into financial contributions, medical assistance, educational programs, and advocacy. Research on humanitarian aid from Indonesian Islamic mass organizations emphasizes the significance of organizational mobilization in sustaining support for Palestine beyond episodic political demonstrations (Andriansyah 2024). This creates an important distinction between symbolic solidarity and institutionalized humanitarian action.

However, the social foundation of Palestine policy also contains risks. Public mobilization can become fragmented, emotionally driven, or vulnerable to misinformation. Aswar and Munzilin's research indicates that Indonesian public solidarity since October 2023 has been substantial but not fully integrated across groups, limiting its collective effectiveness (Aswar and Munzilin 2025). The implication is that the government and civil society should not merely seek greater mobilization but better institutional coordination. Public participation becomes more valuable when it produces informed advocacy, accountable humanitarian assistance, and sustained diplomatic support rather than temporary expressions of outrage.

The most productive relationship between government and society is therefore neither complete alignment nor complete separation. Government should preserve the independence of civil-society actors while creating mechanisms through which legitimate public concerns can inform humanitarian and diplomatic priorities. Civil society, in turn, can strengthen its influence by grounding advocacy in reliable evidence, international humanitarian standards, and transparent

organizational practices. Such an arrangement would transform public opinion from a political pressure variable into a source of democratic legitimacy and policy capacity.

C. Humanitarian Diplomacy as the Operationalization of Normative Commitment

Humanitarian diplomacy represents the most direct mechanism through which Indonesia can translate political solidarity into practical outcomes. Diplomatic statements supporting Palestine have symbolic importance, but their humanitarian value is limited unless accompanied by mechanisms capable of improving civilian protection, humanitarian access, medical assistance, food security, reconstruction, or refugee support. Indonesian diplomacy has increasingly combined political advocacy with humanitarian initiatives, particularly following the escalation in Gaza after October 2023. Research on Indonesian diplomatic actions identifies humanitarian diplomacy as one component of a broader strategy involving multilateral engagement and diplomatic communication (Heriamsal and Manurung 2024).

The importance of humanitarian diplomacy lies partly in its compatibility with Indonesia's middle-power position. Indonesia lacks the military or economic leverage of major powers capable of unilaterally changing the strategic balance of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. It can nevertheless contribute through coalition-building, humanitarian partnerships, international institutions, and diplomatic advocacy. This is where the independent and active doctrine becomes practically relevant. "Active" foreign policy does not necessarily mean direct intervention; it can involve creating diplomatic coalitions, facilitating humanitarian action, and strengthening multilateral pressure for compliance with international norms.

Indonesian humanitarian diplomacy also demonstrates the importance of multi-track engagement. Government institutions are not the only actors involved. Islamic organizations, humanitarian NGOs, universities, medical institutions, and philanthropic organizations can extend the reach of official diplomacy. Studies of Indonesian humanitarian engagement emphasize the contribution of religious and civil-society organizations in mobilizing assistance and maintaining transnational networks (Andriansyah 2024). Such networks can provide capabilities that government diplomacy alone cannot easily reproduce. At the same time, coordination is necessary because fragmented humanitarian action can generate duplication, inconsistent priorities, or accountability problems.

The principal analytical challenge is therefore to prevent humanitarian diplomacy from becoming merely an extension of political messaging. Humanitarian assistance should be guided by needs, impartiality, accountability, and measurable outcomes. Indonesia's credibility is strengthened when humanitarian action can demonstrate concrete benefits rather than simply invoking solidarity. This is particularly important in a highly politicized conflict where humanitarian assistance may itself become contested. Clear institutional

procedures, transparent funding, professional humanitarian partnerships, and systematic monitoring can protect assistance from political instrumentalization.

Humanitarian diplomacy can consequently become the bridge between normative foreign policy and practical state capacity. It allows Indonesia to maintain its political commitment to Palestinian rights while contributing in domains where its capabilities are comparatively meaningful. The strongest policy model is therefore one in which political advocacy, humanitarian assistance, and diplomatic coalition-building reinforce each other. Political diplomacy establishes the normative position; humanitarian diplomacy demonstrates practical commitment; and multilateral diplomacy expands the reach of both.

D. International Law, Multilateralism, and the Limits of Indonesian Influence

International law provides Indonesia with an important source of diplomatic legitimacy. The principle of self-determination establishes a normative foundation for Palestinian claims to political independence, while international humanitarian law establishes obligations concerning the conduct of hostilities and protection of civilians. The legal framework is especially important because it allows Indonesia to articulate its Palestine policy through general rules rather than through bilateral political preferences. Indonesian legal scholarship increasingly emphasizes that support for Palestine can be connected to constitutional values, human rights principles, and international legal obligations (Hangin et al. 2025).

Indonesia's participation in international legal and diplomatic institutions is therefore strategically significant. Its engagement with the International Court of Justice demonstrates how a middle power can use international institutions to amplify normative positions. Research examining Indonesia's advocacy before the Court shows that diplomatic rhetoric combined legal arguments, moral claims, and appeals to international responsibility (Rosadi 2025). This approach is particularly valuable because international institutions provide a setting in which states with limited coercive capabilities can exercise influence through law, coalition-building, and normative persuasion.

Nevertheless, legal advocacy has inherent limits. International legal findings do not automatically produce compliance, and diplomatic statements cannot substitute for enforcement mechanisms controlled by more powerful actors. Indonesia must therefore avoid overstating what legal diplomacy can achieve. Its effectiveness should instead be assessed through its ability to contribute to norm clarification, coalition formation, international attention, and political costs for violations. This is consistent with the broader role of middle powers, which often exercise influence through institutions and coalition-building rather than coercion.

The multilateral dimension is especially important because unilateral Indonesian diplomacy would have limited effect. Indonesia can increase its influence by coordinating with states that share interests in civilian protection, self-determination, humanitarian access, and international legality. Its participation in

the United Nations and Organization of Islamic Cooperation provides two complementary diplomatic arenas. The former offers a universal institutional framework, while the latter provides a platform for cooperation among predominantly Muslim states. Research on Indonesia's diplomatic strategy between 2019 and 2024 emphasizes the simultaneous use of bilateral, multilateral, and public diplomacy to promote Palestinian independence (Faathima et al. 2025).

The legal dimension also imposes a responsibility of consistency. Indonesia's Palestine policy becomes more credible when it is embedded within a broader foreign-policy commitment to international law. Selective invocation of legal principles would weaken the normative authority of its position. A legally coherent approach should therefore apply the same basic standards—civilian protection, self-determination, territorial integrity, prohibition of unlawful force, and humanitarian access—across international crises. Such consistency does not require identical diplomatic responses to every conflict, because contexts differ. It does require that the principles invoked in Palestine remain recognizable as general principles rather than politically convenient exceptions.

E. Contemporary Constraints and a Framework for Policy Credibility

The contemporary challenge for Indonesia is to reconcile normative commitment with limited influence. Indonesia cannot independently determine the outcome of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, control humanitarian access, or compel compliance with international law. It can, however, influence the diplomatic environment through coalition-building, humanitarian assistance, legal advocacy, and public diplomacy. The appropriate standard of evaluation should therefore be contribution rather than control. A credible policy is one that maximizes Indonesia's actual capacity to advance civilian protection and Palestinian self-determination without sacrificing diplomatic credibility or domestic legitimacy.

This requires greater integration among foreign-policy instruments. Political statements should be connected to specific diplomatic initiatives; humanitarian assistance should be connected to measurable humanitarian needs; legal advocacy should be connected to multilateral coalition-building; and domestic public engagement should be connected to transparent information. Current literature suggests that Indonesian Palestine diplomacy already operates through several of these channels, but they are often analyzed separately (Ayun et al. 2024; Faathima et al. 2025). An integrated policy framework would allow the government to demonstrate that its Palestine position is not merely rhetorical.

A second requirement concerns institutionalization. Strong personal leadership can generate diplomatic visibility, but long-term credibility requires institutions capable of sustaining policy across administrations. Indonesia's Palestine policy has survived presidential transitions precisely because its foundations extend beyond individual leaders. The next stage should institutionalize humanitarian diplomacy, parliamentary engagement, civil-society coordination, and legal diplomacy so that changes in political leadership do not

disrupt long-term policy coherence. Research on Indonesia's international leadership indicates that the country's global role is frequently contested according to changing interpretations of leadership and strategic ambition (Jemadu and Lantang 2021). Institutionalization can reduce this volatility.

A third requirement is transparency. Humanitarian diplomacy creates obligations toward both beneficiaries and Indonesian citizens who support assistance. Public reporting on humanitarian contributions, partner organizations, distribution mechanisms, and outcomes would strengthen trust and reduce the risk of politicization. Civil-society organizations should likewise maintain professional accountability when operating in the name of humanitarian solidarity. The combination of state diplomacy and civil-society action is powerful precisely because each can compensate for the limitations of the other, but this complementarity depends upon institutional credibility.

Finally, Indonesia should frame Palestine diplomacy as part of a broader commitment to international justice rather than as an exceptional foreign-policy cause detached from general principles. Palestine is undoubtedly distinctive within Indonesian political discourse, but its legal and humanitarian significance is strengthened when connected to universal principles. A consistent commitment to self-determination, civilian protection, humanitarian access, and international law allows Indonesia to maintain solidarity while avoiding the perception that its diplomacy is driven exclusively by religious or domestic political considerations. This would enhance Indonesia's credibility as a middle power seeking to combine normative advocacy with practical diplomacy.

Conclusion

Indonesia's Palestine policy is best understood as a form of normative pragmatism in which stable normative objectives coexist with changing diplomatic instruments. Support for Palestinian self-determination is rooted in Indonesia's anti-colonial identity, constitutional values, international legal principles, and sustained public solidarity. These foundations explain the policy's remarkable continuity across political administrations. At the same time, Indonesia operates within structural constraints that limit its ability to independently influence the conflict. Strategic competition, multilateral bargaining, domestic expectations, and limited material capabilities require Jakarta to translate normative commitment into forms of diplomacy that are institutionally realistic. Public opinion and civil society strengthen the legitimacy of Palestine advocacy but should not be treated as substitutes for professional foreign-policy decision-making.

Humanitarian diplomacy and international law provide the most promising mechanisms for reconciling principle with capability. Humanitarian action allows Indonesia to convert solidarity into practical assistance, while international law provides a universal normative framework through which Indonesia can pursue Palestinian self-determination and civilian protection. The effectiveness of this approach, however, depends on coordination, transparency, legal consistency, and

multilateral coalition-building. Indonesia should therefore strengthen the institutional connection between diplomatic advocacy, humanitarian assistance, legal engagement, and civil-society participation. The credibility of Palestine policy should ultimately be measured not by the intensity of political rhetoric but by the consistency of principles, the quality of humanitarian outcomes, and Indonesia's capacity to contribute meaningfully to a rules-based international order.

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The authors state that there is no conflict of interest in the publication of this article.

Publishing Ethical and Originality Statement

All authors declared that this work is original and has never been published in any form and in any media, nor is it under consideration for publication in any journal, and all sources cited in this work refer to the basic standards of scientific citation.

Generative AI Statement

N/A