
Strategic Partnership in the Context of State Relations in Bilateral, Trilateral, and Multilateral Relations from the Perspective of Indonesia's Maritime Security

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Abstract

In the era of globalization and dynamic geopolitical changes, strategic partnerships play a crucial role in strengthening maritime defense. This study explores the impact of bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral strategic partnerships on Indonesia's maritime defense, emphasizing how these partnerships enhance Indonesia's position in regional and global security. As the largest archipelagic nation, Indonesia's maritime interests span international trade routes, resource management, and security concerns, making strategic collaboration essential. By analyzing various forms of partnerships and their dynamics, this research aims to identify the strengths, challenges, and opportunities that arise from such alliances, particularly in addressing non-traditional threats like transnational crime and regional instability. Through literature review and data analysis, the study reveals that strategic partnerships, while beneficial in improving military capabilities and fostering international cooperation, face obstacles such as differing national interests, imbalances in defense capabilities, and internal political dynamics. The findings highlight the importance of maintaining and developing strategic partnerships as an integral part of Indonesia's maritime defense policy, enabling the country to strengthen its regional influence and contribute to global stability.

Keywords: Strategic Partnership, Bilateral Relationship, Trilateral Relationship, Multilateral Relationship



INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization and evolving geopolitical dynamics, international relations are increasingly complex and interrelated. The partnership strategy is one key approach to facing global and regional challenges, especially in the context of maritime defense. Strategic Partnerships, whether in bilateral, trilateral, or multilateral relations, have become important for countries to strengthen their positions, enhance security, and facilitate collaboration in various strategic aspects.

As the world's largest archipelagic country with 17,504 islands, Indonesia has significant strategic interests in maintaining maritime security and stability. The vast ocean around Indonesia is a vital international trade route, an important natural resource, and a potential arena for international conflict and cooperation. In this context, strategic partnerships bilaterally, trilaterally, and multilaterally play a crucial role in supporting Indonesia's maritime defense policy.

Strategic Partnership in the context of good state relations is a key component in international diplomacy involving bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral interactions. This study explores the role and impact of the Strategic Partnership from the perspective of Indonesia's maritime defense. This journal aims to explore the dynamics and impact of Strategic

Partnership in the context of bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral relations from the perspective of Indonesia's maritime defense. By analyzing these different forms of partnerships, it is hoped that existing strengths, challenges, and opportunities can be identified and relevant recommendations for developing Indonesia's maritime defense policy can be provided more effectively.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used in this article is a literature study. Literature Study activities collect materials related to research derived from books, scientific journals, literature, and other publications that are worthy of being used as a source for research to be researched through explanation and data analysis based on various views of experts (Moto, 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Strategic Partnership

Strategic Partnership in the context of relations between countries refers to long-term collaboration to achieve mutually beneficial common goals while strengthening regional or global security and stability. For example, countries with similar economic or security interests may form Strategic Partnerships to enhance trade, technology, or defense cooperation. In this partnership, the two sides usually conduct an in-depth exchange of information, investment, and diplomatic support to strengthen their position in the international arena, increase bargaining power, and face global challenges together. Such partnerships also often involve a commitment to resolve disputes peacefully and build a network of trust between leaders and communities in the countries concerned.

A Strategic Partnership, or strategic partnership, is a formal relationship built between two or more groups or countries to achieve a common goal that has been agreed upon or meets the interests required by each of them independently. The main goal of Strategic Partnership is to achieve certain goals that cannot be achieved by one's efforts (Dicken, 1992). Strategic Partnership, or Strategic Partnership, is a concept in international relations that describes various countries' attachment and commitment to cooperation. A strategic partnership is a structured collaboration between countries, both bilaterally and multilaterally, that looks at and utilizes opportunities and phenomena in the economic and security fields together. Strategic Partnerships built by countries tend to be based on common interests and goals, not on the definition of common threats being faced. In international relations, strategic partnerships are often used by countries as a diplomatic forum to realize their goals and interests together with other countries that have the same goals and interests. With the formation of a Strategic Partnership involving several countries with the same goals and interests, achieving these interests is considered easier (Ginting, 2022).

International Cooperation

International cooperation refers to the relationship between one country and another that aims to meet the needs of the people and the interests of countries around the world. This cooperation covers various fields such as politics, social, defense and security, culture, and economy and follows each country's foreign policy. International cooperation is establishing relationships between one institution and another within the scope of cross-border relations through agreements to achieve a goal. International cooperation takes various forms, starting from economic cooperation and trade. International cooperation is not the same as international trade. Because international cooperation has a wider range than international trade. International cooperation is the relationship between a country and another country through certain agreements that uphold the principles of justice and mutual benefit (Wardani and Budiawan, 2021).

Cooperation between countries, or international cooperation, is the relationship built between one country and another through agreements to achieve common goals. Cooperation between countries varies greatly, including in defense and security, economy, trade, and others. International cooperation is necessary to meet the needs of life and ensure the existence of a country in the global community, as well as to create peace and prosperity, which is the hope of all people and countries. Each country has different advantages, disadvantages, and interests, which encourage establishing international relations and cooperation. Cooperation between nations is based on mutual respect and benefit (Kresnandi, 2016).

Objectives of International Cooperation

According to Kusumohamidjojo (1987), every country cooperating with other countries must have a purpose. The following are the objectives of cooperation between countries as follows:

1. Overcoming shortcomings in the economic field experienced by each party involved in cooperation.
2. Improving the economy of parties who cooperate in various sectors.
3. Improving the quality of human life, global well-being, and prosperity.
4. Expanding relationships and strengthening friendship bonds.
5. Increasing foreign exchange earnings, especially for the countries involved in FormBottom of Form.

The cooperation that is formed will eventually lead to the creation of interdependence, where international organizations, as a forum for cooperation, play an important role as non-state actors. The ultimate goal of the cooperation is determined by the common fundamental interests of each party involved (Kusumohamidjojo, 1987). International cooperation aims to create mutually beneficial partnerships between countries worldwide to overcome global challenges that cannot be solved individually, such as climate change, food security, and pandemics. By leveraging the strengths and expertise of each party, international cooperation enables the exchange of valuable knowledge, technology, and resources, as well as supports sustainable economic development and human well-being. Countries can reach more effective and inclusive solutions through dialogue and coordination, strengthen diplomatic relations, and create a more stable and prosperous world.

Factors of International Cooperation

According to Wardani and Budiawan (2021), in principle, several factors are the basic reasons why a country decides to carry out International Cooperation with other countries. The factors are as follows:

1. Differences in Natural Resources

Differences in natural resources between countries vary greatly in type and amount. Some countries have abundant natural resources, while others have few. For example, Indonesia is rich in raw materials, while Saudi Arabia lacks industrial raw materials despite their high demand. Therefore, countries with few raw materials tend to cooperate with countries with many raw materials to meet their needs.

2. Differences in Climate and Soil Fertility

Climate and soil fertility variations between countries affect the types of plants that can grow in each place. For example, tropical countries such as Indonesia, with high rainfall and fertile soil, can produce rice, coffee, tea, and rubber crops. On the other hand, countries with temperate climates, such as those in Europe, are not suitable for growing these crops, so they have to import them from tropical countries.

3. Differences in Science and Technology

The level of ability and mastery of science and technology varies between countries. Developed countries such as the United States, Japan, Western Europe, and Germany generally have a superior advantage over developing countries in Africa and Asia. Developing countries

can collaborate with developed countries to address this gap and improve their knowledge and technology.

4. Ideological Differences

Ideological differences between the territory of one country and another can lead to conflicts, even international conflicts. Effective cooperation is needed to reduce existing tensions or conflicts so that the problem does not worsen. For example, Hong Kong, separate from the communist People's Republic of China, must establish political cooperation with a liberal country such as the United States. This cooperation is important so that problems can be overcome through negotiations.

Meanwhile, according to Kartasasmita (1997), international cooperation is driven by several factors. These factors are as follows:

1. Advances in technology make relations between countries easier to establish, thereby increasing interdependence between them.
2. Economic progress development and economic growth affect a nation's and state's welfare. A country's welfare can also impact the welfare of other countries in the world.
3. The change is like warfare, in which a common impulse is to protect and defend each other through international cooperation.
4. There is an awareness and desire to organize. The first method of international cooperation is based on the belief that organizing will make it easier to solve the problems faced.

Forms of International Cooperation Based on the Number of Countries

Foreign cooperation is cooperation between the Indonesian government and friendly countries or international organizations (intergovernmental and non-governmental institutions). In building these relationships, Indonesia always prioritizes a form of social life that upholds the values of mutual respect, does not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, rejects violence and consultation, and prioritizes consensus in decision-making procedures. Especially in the field of cooperation in the field of transportation, the government of Indonesia actively participates in various conferences and forums to achieve common goals. The following forms of cooperation between countries based on the number of countries involved are as follows:

a. Bilateral Cooperation

Bilateral cooperation is a form of cooperation between two countries involving certain fields. Several forms of bilateral cooperation bind littoral states in security and defense. This cooperation includes cooperation on border issues, cooperation in joint military exercises, and cooperation in the defense industry sector (Ho, 2005). It can be said that cooperation on border issues is part of the basis for cooperation. Security cooperation in this bilateral-level framework makes littoral states more comfortable interacting with other countries (Meganingratna, 2012). One example of bilateral cooperation is Indonesia and the United States, which signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Maritime Cooperation on October 24, 2015. This fact sheet provides further details on several key maritime initiatives between the United States and Indonesia as quoted from the US Embassy and Consulates (2015), namely:

- 1) Protecting Coastal Communities and Fisheries
- 2) Combating Fish Theft
- 3) Expanding Science and Technology Cooperation in the Marine Sector
- 4) Improving Maritime and Port Security
- 5) Promoting Sustainable and Environmentally Friendly Economic Growth
- 6) Helping Victims of Forced Labor in the Seafood Industry and Pushing for Justice
- 7) Aiding and Protecting Irregular Migration Movements

b. Trilateral Cooperation

Trilateral cooperation is a form of cooperation involving three countries. This form of cooperation can include regional and international cooperation in various sectors. For example, in maritime security, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines are working together to maintain security in the Sulu Sea. In 2017, this trilateral cooperation introduced the Maritime Command Control policy integrated with the Trilateral Coordinated Patrol, which previously existed. Maritime Command Control, inaugurated in Tarakan with the Ministers of Defense representatives from the three countries, serves as a command center to provide emergency information and assistance in an emergency involving citizens or vessels in the trilateral patrol area. In the process of the agreement, Indonesia, through the Ministry of Defense, initiated cooperation in the exchange of intelligence information that supports the establishment of this Maritime Command Control (Khasanah et al., 2021)

c. Multilateral Cooperation

Multilateral cooperation is a form of cooperation that involves more than two countries or several countries at once. This cooperation can be in the form of regional cooperation, which is carried out based on certain regions in special sectors (Meganingratna, 2012). One example of multilateral cooperation carried out by Indonesia in the field of Maritime Security is the Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting (HACGAM), Indonesia Maritime Partnership Initiative with Japan, India, South Korea, China, and Singapore (Indrawati & Nugroho, 2018).

Maritime Security

The concept of maritime security lies between two frameworks: traditional and non-traditional security. In the traditional security framework, maritime security breaches are considered a threat to the identity and sovereignty of the state. In contrast, in a non-traditional framework, maritime security violations are considered threats to various aspects of the state, including ethnic, religious, racial, and intergroup (SARA), economy, migration, environment, and state resources (Nugraha and Sudirman, 2016). Christian Bueger (2015) states that Maritime Security includes four main concepts: Sea Power, Marine Safety, Blue Economy, and Human Security. The concept of sea power emphasizes the role of the navy in protecting the country's sustainability, maintaining sea transportation routes for trade, and supporting economic activities. Marine safety is concerned with protecting ships and marine installations, focusing on professional safety and protecting the marine environment. The concept of marine economics highlights the importance of the ocean in trade and fisheries, the potential of natural resources such as oil and mining materials from the seabed, and the contribution of coastal tourism to economic income. Human security is also related to maritime security, covering food availability, shelter, sustainable living, and secure employment.

Dynamics and Challenges in Strategic Partnership

In Indonesia's maritime defense context, Strategic Partnership is important in shaping and managing relationships between countries. Regional dynamics greatly influence Indonesia's maritime security development in Southeast Asia. Indonesia's membership in ASEAN has an impact in the form of maritime security challenges due to Indonesia's open geographical position and direct borders with neighboring countries. This condition has increased transnational crime, which has become a common problem in the region because of its impact on ASEAN security. Tensions of interest are increasingly felt by global conflicts and dynamics that affect and impact the development of maritime security in Southeast Asia, such as the South China Sea conflict, the Russia-Ukraine war, and the Belt and Road Initiative initiated by China. (Marsetio, 2018)

The Strategic Partnership in the context of Indonesia's maritime defense is characterized by several main dynamics, including:

1. Raising awareness of the importance of maritime security

The increase in global maritime activities, such as trade, fisheries, and exploration of marine resources, has prompted countries to focus more on maritime security. This increased cooperation in various areas, including joint patrols, intelligence exchanges, and military exercises. The threat of maritime crime in Indonesia is expected to continue to increase along with the increase in economic activity in the country's waters. In addition, the world's increasingly shifting trade hub to Asia, given the region's population growth, is also exacerbating these threats. These threats have an impact not only on Indonesia's economic growth but also on the country's international image. Therefore, Indonesia must immediately create a safe marine environment for all (Anugerah, 2017). Therefore, increasing awareness of the importance of maritime security is one of the focuses for partner countries, especially for the government of Indonesia itself.

2. Military Technology Development

The development of global military technology and industry in response to emerging threats has significantly changed how warfare is conducted. Warfare now involves a country's various armament advantages, supported by the acquisition and ownership of technology and the defense industry. These factors greatly affect the superiority of one of the parties in the conflict. Transformation in warfare cannot be separated from changes in the type and number of actors involved, the tools used, the battlefield, the way the war takes place, and the goals or results to be achieved. (Rachmat, 2014). The rapid development of military technology, such as increasingly sophisticated sensor systems, weapons, and warships, has changed the maritime security landscape. Indonesia's partner countries also shared technology and knowledge to improve Indonesia's maritime defense capabilities.

3. Competition for influence in the region

Competition for influence between major countries in the Indo-Pacific region also colors the dynamics of Indonesia's Strategic Partnership. Indonesia seeks to take advantage of this competition to get support and assistance from various parties in maintaining its maritime security. Four important events strengthened influence in the region, namely: the Indo-Pacific (India and Japan) in 2007, the Rebalancing toward Asia (the United States and Indonesia) in 2011, the Maritime Silk Road (China) in 2013, and the World Maritime Axis (Indonesia) in 2014. These events reflect international political rivalry between major powers such as the United States, China, India, and Japan in the fight for access and control over three key aspects along the shipping lanes between the Indian and Pacific Oceans: shipping lanes, markets, and natural resources. These great powers have a strong national ability to compete at the regional and global levels, especially in terms of military power, financial power, and technological mastery (Yani and Montratama, 2015).

4. Non-Traditional Threats

Indonesia's strategic position, in terms of geography, geopolitics, and geoeconomics, certainly has the potential to benefit its people's welfare. However, this condition also poses vulnerabilities in defense and security aspects, especially maritime security. Maritime security is a crucial issue in line with the rapid development of non-traditional threats involving various national, regional, and international actors. We can see that maritime security is increasingly complex with the increased combat operations at sea, especially related to transnational crime. (Fajriah & Latifah, 2018)

Maritime security is now evolving towards non-traditional threats, resulting in wars at sea facing various forms of crime that violate the boundaries of law and national security. In this context, ASEAN, as a regional alliance, requires an active role and collective awareness from its members to jointly protect the maritime region from the threat of transnational crime. It is necessary to understand that ASEAN is an important strategic region for global trade traffic and the world economy. (Sajidin, et al., 2023).

While the Strategic Partnership has many benefits for the countries involved, several challenges need to be addressed and watched out for by these countries, including:

1. Differences of Interest

Each country involved must have different national interests, which can lead to differences in views and priorities in cooperation. Interaction between countries is carried out to build good relations in the region and relate to each country's national interests. Countries are driven by their national interests when carrying out these interactions. To achieve these interests, the country will maintain its sovereignty and independence in determining its destiny and have equal rights and obligations with other countries in the world (Hidayat, 2018).

2. Capability Imbalance

The imbalance in military capabilities between Indonesia and partner countries can be a significant obstacle to the effectiveness of defense and security cooperation. Significant differences in technology, training, or military resources between the two sides can lead to disharmony in joint operations, reduce coordination capabilities, and affect the outcome of the designed strategy. Partner countries with more advanced military capabilities may have technological and tactical advantages that Indonesia does not have, while Indonesia may have special needs that have not been fully accommodated in such cooperation. This imbalance can result in difficulties in aligning strategic goals, increase communication risks, and hinder achieving shared goals, requiring additional efforts to align capabilities and ensure more effective and productive cooperation.

3. Threats to Sovereignty

Maritime security is closely related to each country's efforts to protect its maritime boundaries and jurisdictions from various threats, challenges, obstacles, and disturbances (ATHGs) that could threaten their sovereignty in the maritime sector. Transnational crime that crosses national borders is a form of crime that often occurs in archipelagic countries, including Indonesia and other Southeast Asian countries, and can interfere with the national interests of each country. (N. Klein, 2010).

The increasing threats to maritime security can be grouped into political, economic, and environmental threats. Based on the source, threats can be divided into domestic and international. For international threats, Indonesia needs to focus on cooperation with countries in the Southeast Asian region in an effort to prevent and crack down on transnational crimes. By actively participating in ASEAN regional alliances and cross-border cooperation, it is hoped that joint solutions can be found to address transnational crime in Southeast Asia (Sajidin et al., 2023).

4. Domestic Political Dynamics

Unstable domestic political dynamics often interfere with international cooperation in maritime security, as leadership changes, policy shifts, or internal conflicts can affect the consistency and priorities of countries in committing to international agreements. When governments experience political change or instability, foreign policy, including cooperation in maritime security, can experience uncertainty or sudden adjustments that hinder implementation and coordination with partner countries. Political changes can lead to changes in resource allocation, strategic priorities, or even a review of agreements that have been agreed upon, affecting the effectiveness and sustainability of international cooperation. It can also reduce trust between partners and create uncertainty that negatively impacts joint efforts to maintain stable and secure maritime security.

The Impact of Strategic Partnership in Indonesia's Maritime Defense Perspective

Strategic partnerships in the context of maritime defense have a very significant impact. This cooperation not only strengthens bilateral or multilateral relations but also improves the defense capabilities of each country. Through intelligence sharing, joint exercises, and joint maritime defense technology development, partner countries can enhance maritime

surveillance, joint patrol, and response capabilities to maritime threats such as piracy, illegal fish theft, and maritime conflicts. In addition, strategic partnerships can also create a deterrent effect for potential threats and strengthen the bargaining position of partner countries in maritime negotiations at the regional and global levels. One example is the United States-Indonesia Comprehensive Partnership Agreement, which affects maritime security cooperation between the United States and Indonesia, namely the decrease in illegal fishing cases in Indonesian waters and the policy of sinking fishing vessels that have been proven to be violated. Regarding the decline in illegal fishing cases in Indonesia's waters in the 2016-2019 period, this is because cooperation between the United States and Indonesia in the field of maritime security in the US-Indonesia CPA has begun to be realized, such as routine sea patrols by the US Coast Guard with BAKAMLA RI, dialogue activities, and CARAT exercises (Bila et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

Strategic partnerships built through bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral relations strengthen Indonesia's position in facing maritime defense challenges. By leveraging these various partnerships, Indonesia can enhance its maritime defense capabilities, strengthen regional security, and contribute to global stability in strategic maritime areas. Therefore, Indonesia needs to continue to develop and maintain this strategic relationship as part of a comprehensive maritime defense strategy. Strategic Partnership in maritime defense is a very important instrument for countries to maintain regional security and stability. Countries can build strong and sustainable partnerships by understanding the benefits and challenges.

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