



Foreign Policy of the Republic of Indonesia in the Palestine-Israel Conflict from a Normative Theory Perspective

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ABSTRACT: The Palestine–Israel conflict, is one of the most complex and prolonged issues in modern international politics, marked by an acute humanitarian crisis since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. In this context, Indonesia holds a distinctive position as a country that has consistently supported the Palestinian struggle, from the era of President Soekarno to President Joko Widodo. This research, aims to analyze Indonesia's foreign policy toward the Palestine–Israel issue through the lens of normative theory in International Relations, which emphasizes the importance of moral values, ethical principles, and international norms in state decision-making. Utilizing a qualitative method based on literature studies and in-depth interviews, this study explores how the constitutional foundation of the 1945 Constitution, the values of Pancasila, and the nation's moral identity shape Indonesia's consistent stance in international forums. The findings reveal, that Indonesia's support for Palestine is not merely a political strategy or a response to global dynamics, but rather a representation of a normative commitment to justice, human rights, and anti-colonial principles. The normative theory approach in this study demonstrates that Indonesia's foreign policy reflects the nation's ethical identity as well as its moral stance in confronting global injustices experienced by the Palestinian people. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of how normative theory can be applied to analyze foreign policy in the Global South, particularly in post-colonial contexts. The study also provides insights for policy makers and scholars in recognizing the enduring role of ethical considerations in shaping international relations.

Keywords: Normative Theory, Indonesia Foreign Policy, Palestine-Israel Conflicts, Moral Value and International Ethics, Human Rights.



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INTRODUCTION

The conflict between Palestine and Israel has become one of the longest international issues and has attracted global attention for more than seven decades. Since the founding of the state of Israel in 1948, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and the General Assembly of the United Nations have issued various resolutions to encourage de-escalation acts and resolve this conflict.

They are Resolution A/RES/76/79 of December 15, 2021, which calls for the protection of Palestinian property ([United Nation, 2021](#)); Resolution A.RES/77/247 of December 30, 2022, concerning health services and human rights violations against Palestinian civilians ([General Assembly, 2022](#)); and Resolution 2720 of December 22, 2023, concerning the delivery of humanitarian aid through the Gaza Strip ([Kementerian Luar Negeri Indonesia, 2019](#)).

The historical roots of this conflict cannot be separated from the emergence of the Zionist movement in the late 19th century, pioneered by Theodor Herzl through the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, in 1897. Herzl conducted active diplomacy with major European powers, including Britain, which then issued the Balfour Declaration in 1917—an official letter of support for the Jewish community to establish a “homeland” in Palestine ([Clancy-Smith & Smith, 2014](#)). After World War I, the Palestinian territories were under British mandate based on the Treaty of Versailles ([Clancy-Smith & Smith, 2014](#)), and since then mass Jewish migration to Palestine has been intensively facilitated. In 1947, the UN issued Resolution No. 181, which divided the Palestinian territories into two states, which was immediately followed by the declaration of Israeli independence and the large-scale displacement of Palestinians ([Clancy-Smith & Smith, 2014](#); [Husein et al., 2025](#); [Nation, 1947](#)).

Palestinian rebellion has taken various forms, from diplomacy to armed struggle. Peace efforts through the 1993 Oslo Accords, mediated by the United States, despite promising administrative control over Gaza and the West Bank, have yet to be fully implemented ([Emily Rodriguez, 2023](#)).

The West Bank remains 80% Israeli-controlled, and Gaza remains under a tight blockade, marked by frequent incidents of evictions, detentions and military operations ([Amnesty International, 2022, 2023](#)).

The humanitarian situation in Gaza since October 2023 has had a severe impact on Palestinian society: an estimated 1.75 million people, or about 75% of the population, have been displaced; 2.2 million residents face the risk of severe food insecurity; and more than 40,000 people have lost their lives, including infants, children, and the elderly ([UNHCR, 2023](#)). The duration and intensity of these hostilities make it one of the most severe humanitarian crisis since 1948.

In a situation that has drawn significant international concern, a fundamental question arises: why does Indonesia consistently supporting Palestine, even when the prospects for peace remain uncertain? This is where the normative theory approach to international relations becomes highly relevant. This approach assesses foreign policy not only from the perspective of rational power or economic interests but also from the foundation of global values, moral norms and ethical principles. Normative theory seeks to understand how states act, not solely based on cost-benefit calculations, but also on a commitment to principles of justice and humanity.

Since the era of President Sukarno, Indonesia has asserted its ethical position through explicit support for the Palestinian struggle, as affirmed at the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference, which resulted in the Proclaiming Support for Palestine ([Bachtiar et al., 2021](#)). This consistency has continued into the contemporary era, with every president—from Soeharto to Joko Widodo—demonstrating a consistent stance despite domestic political dynamics and global geopolitical pressures ([Bunga, 2018](#); [Irfan & Hafid, 2024](#)). Even during periods of transition and domestic crises, such as during

the eras of Presidents Habibie and Megawati, Indonesia's commitment to Palestine remains unchanged ([Bachtiar et al., 2021](#))

Various previous studies have highlighted the dimensions of Indonesia's humanitarian diplomacy towards Palestine ([Al-Fatih, 2025](#); [Rohmah & Zahro, 2024](#)) including the contributions of governmental and non-governmental institutions such as BAZNAS and the ICRC ([Abdi et al., 2022](#); [Ratna et al., 2024](#)), as well as Indonesia's role in the UN Security Council ([Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2021](#)). However, most of these studies have not elaborated on the ethical and philosophical dimensions of Indonesia's foreign policy: is this support merely a reaction to geopolitical developments, or does it manifest a normative commitment to universal values enshrined in the constitution and national identity?

Based on these questions, this article aims to analyze Indonesia's foreign policy towards the Palestine–Israel conflict through a normative theory approach. By focusing on values such as solidarity, global justice, and the protection of human rights, this approach allows us to understand a country's foreign policy more deeply, particularly by exploring the fundamental values embraced by that country.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative methodology to examine Indonesia's foreign policy toward Palestine, emphasizing motivations, values and actions. The analysis is guided by a normative framework and supported by semi-structured interviews with interviews experts as well as document review. Data collection and analysis followed by three steps: selecting relevant informants, conducting interviews and literature review and applying the analysis into research results.

Literature review: The literature review article is conducted using Google Scholar and academic journals within the field of international relations using the keywords "Indonesia Foreign Policy", "Indonesia Diplomacy to Palestine" and "Indonesia Contribution to Palestine". The Sci Space website supported the screening and organizing process, enabling a comprehensive review. Five articles were selected based on their relevance, credibility, and contribution to this research topic.

As part of the qualitative research, three Middle East observers were purposely selected as the informants representing Bina Nusantara University, Brawijaya University, and Padjadjaran University to provide diverse academic insight on Palestine-Israel conflicts, particularly regarding Indonesia foreign policy in supporting Palestine.

This research is conducted using online communication platforms, primarily Zoom, considering the geographical dispersion of the informants. This setting ensured flexibility in interaction and enabled the researchers to obtain perspectives from scholars with different background institutions.

The data was collected through an interview with three Middle East and North Africa experts from Brawijaya University, Bina Nusantara University, and Padjadjaran University. In addition, the

authors also conduct literature studies using official documents and statements from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia.

Before conducting the interviews, four preparatory steps were taken. First, the authors selected the informants whose academic background was relevant to the research. Second, official letters and thesis proposals were sent to the informants to obtain their consent and provide an overview of the research. Finally, the authors and informants begin the dialogue addressing the key issues and research questions, to create an analysis.

The data analysis procedure began with organizing the information according to a conceptual framework which in this study is norms. Second, the authors sought to identify the general assumption and underlying meanings within the data to capture the participants' perspectives and develop emerging ideas and concepts. Last, the authors interpreted the findings, derived key insights, and the information was presented as the research results.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The study of Indonesia's foreign policy toward Palestine has been widely explored with an emphasizing in its historical solidarity, anti-colonial principles and multilateral activism. This body of literature provides a foundation for understanding Indonesia's role as an actor and supporter of humanitarian initiatives. At the same time, the diversity of approaches ranging from diplomatic contributions at the UN Level to NGO – led humanitarian actors reflects the multidimensional nature of Indonesia's engagement with the Palestinian Issue.

No	Authors	Year	Study Focus	Findings	Sources
1	Suratiningsih, Puspita and Shafira	2020	Synergy between government and NGOs in supporting Palestine	Government diplomacy emphasizes international advocacy, while NGO's deliver humanitarian aid. This "dual-track diplomacy" strengthens Indonesia's credibility.	(Suratiningsih & Puspita, 2020)
2	Sawaki	2022	Historical root of Indonesia-Palestine relations	Early recognition of Indonesia by Palestine created enduring solidarity. Indonesia refuses to recognize Israel, supports Palestine through NAM, OIC, and expands in trade, education and health.	(Nurlisa & Sawaki, 2022)
3	Gati and Hafid	2024	Indonesia's diplomatic contribution since 1948 using	Indonesia consistently advocates for two-state revolution plays roles as mediator, motivator and co-sponsor in the UN,	(Irfan & Hafid, 2024)

No	Authors	Year	Study Focus	Findings	Sources
			conflict resolution theory	and rejects unilateral policies such as U.S. recognition of Jerusalem	
4	A'yun Istifarin, Hidayatullah and Soleh	2024	Indonesia's position in multilateral diplomacy.	Indonesia consistently promotes human rights, calls for cessation of violence and advocates the two-state solution in international forums.	(Qurrota A'yun et al., 2024)
5	Rohmah and Zahro	2024	Humanitarian diplomacy during the Gaza crisis.	Indonesia NGO's (MER-C, Dompet Dhuafa, lazismu, Rumah Zakat) provided direct medical, food, and relief aid, strengthening Indonesia global humanitarian image.	(Rohmah & Zahro, 2024)

Overall, the literature highlights Indonesia multidimensional engagement with Palestine, encompassing diplomatic, humanitarian and bilateral strategies. While earlier works stress historical solidarity, NGO involvement, and Indonesia activism in multilateral forums, fewer studies explicitly connect these practices to Indonesia's constitutional foundations and post-colonial identity. This gap provides the entry point for present research which seeks to explain Indonesia's pro-Palestinian stance as normative commitment embedded in its constitutional mandate and identity as postcolonial state.

Theoretical Framework: Norms

Norms are understood as a set of prescriptive statements that guide actions according to provisions, both procedurally and substantively. Norms are formed from perceptions of values, self-control, and moral beliefs. Norms also give rise to social expectations about what should be done. In international relations, norms are closely linked to international law, which is historical and dynamic, and remains bound by legal principles that evolve over time ([Carlsnaes et al., 2002](#)).

Andrew Hurrell ([Hurrell, 2002](#)) asserts that international norms are not merely rules governing behaviour (regulative) but also shape political identities and meanings (constitutive). Norms develop through institutions, global discourse, and transnational networks. According to Hurrell, normative theory must be seen as part of a constantly changing socio-historical structure, not as an absolute or static entity. He also emphasizes the importance of the participation of non-state actors, including transnational civil society, in shaping and reconstructing international norms. This view aligns with ([Christians et al., 2009](#)) view of normative theory as an ongoing conversation amidst social change. They reject normative theory as a final product of history and emphasize its deliberative nature—namely, the shared search for ethical and inclusive public formulas to resolve collective problems. In the context of public communication, normative theory is a rational explanation of how discourse can be conducted to respect the moral claims of various parties.

Both approaches are grounded in a recognition of value pluralism. Hurrell critiques the practice of "organized hypocrisy" by powerful states, which often monopolize the narrative of universal norms for hegemonic interests. He calls for the formation of global norms through a reflective and interactive process across cultures. Christians et al. also emphasize that modern normative theory must include voices from Asia, Africa, the Islamic world, and Latin America—as a corrective to the dominance of the Western libertarian paradigm.

Both Hurrell and Christians place pluralism and justice at the center of norm construction. For Hurrell, global justice demands a balance between respect for sovereignty and universal moral values such as the right to self-determination. For Christians, the success of normative theory depends on its ability to bridge moral differences, thus strengthening democracy and public civility.

Within this framework, Indonesia's foreign policy on the Palestinian issue can be understood not merely as a political stance, but as an expression of active participation in global normative discourse. As a post-colonial state, Indonesia carries a moral identity rooted in global solidarity and values of justice, positioning Indonesia as a participant in international dialogues on global justice and equitable governance.

Current of Palestine Situation in Statistic Data

Since the attacks of October 7, 2023, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem have entered the worst conditions in the history of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Armed hostilities, blockades, and airstrikes cause extensive damage to infrastructure and disrupted access to education for thousands of children. Access to necessities such as clean water, food, and healthcare have become increasingly limited. Amidst overcrowded and increasingly deteriorating living conditions, millions of people live facing hunger, infectious diseases, and the loss of family members. This humanitarian situation has been widely documented by international agencies such as UNHCR and UNICEF.

Year	Location	Quantitative Data	Affected Sector	Source
2023	Gaza, West Bank, East Yerusalem	3.1 million people need assistance; 2.2 million in Gaza, 1 million are children.	Education : 370 of Elementary school buildings heavily damaged; 221 teachers died ; 4.156 students died; 7.818 students injured. Health Sector: 27/39 Hospitals are malfunction. 60% of Violation separated around Jenin, Nablus Tulkarem. And 25% at Ramallah.	(Global Trends , UNHCR, 2023)
2024	Gaza and West Bank	1.5 million children needs humanitarian assistance : injured,	Education : 534 schools in Gaza damages	(Nation, 2024)

Foreign Policy of the Republic of Indonesia in the Palestine-Israel Conflict from a Normative Theory Perspective

Medina, Darmawan and Yulianti

Year	Location	Quantitative Data	Affected Sector	Source
		died, separated from their families	Enviromental waste causes hepatitis, polio and diarrhea.	
		3.3 million adults and elderly : 2.3 people in Gaza strip, 800.000 in West Bank	Economy Sector: unemployment 81%, poverty 74,3%	
2025	Gaza and West Bank	3.3 million people needs humanitarian assistance : 1.7 million children, 17.000 pregnant mother	Food Security : 11.000 pregnancies is having starvation and 270.000 childern is malnutrition Environmental Health: 1.5 million people lack of water and sanitation Security sector : Children are affected by explosive remnants of war	(Nation, 2025)

Normative Approach to Indonesia Foreign Policy

Indonesia's foreign policy on the Palestinian issue is not solely driven by narrow national interests such as security, economics, or strategic calculations, but also by a commitment to moral values deeply rooted in the constitution and the nation's history of struggle.

As a nation born out of colonialism, Indonesia has shaped its foreign policy identity on the foundation of anti-colonialism, solidarity with the struggle for independence, and defense of human rights. Therefore, Indonesia's consistent support for Palestine is not merely a reaction to a humanitarian crisis but rather a reflection of the constitutive norms that have become part of its foreign policy identity.

This consistency was emphasized by informant Y, who stated that Indonesia's support for Palestine is a manifestation of the constitutional mandate, which affirms Indonesia's obligation to play a role in creating world peace, including supporting countries that have not yet become independent ([Interview, May 27, 2025](#)). Informant D expressed a similar view, stating that this support was also based on historical mandate, referring to the holding of the Asia-Africa Conference (AAC) in Bandung in April 1955. Palestine was one of the participants at the conference, which remains under colonial rule to this day ([Interview, May 30, 2025](#)).

This situation strengthens Indonesia's consistency in maintaining support for the Palestinian independence struggle as part of its foreign policy commitment. Therefore, a normative approach to international relations is highly relevant for understanding the direction and consistency of Indonesia's foreign policy toward Palestine. Normative theory, as explained by Andrew Hurrell, emphasizes that international norms are not merely rules governing actions but also shape a state's

identity and preferences. Within this framework, Indonesia's support for Palestine can be understood as a form of active participation in the evolving structure of international norms—and as an expression of values internalized within its national identity. Using this approach, Indonesia's position is not seen as an anomaly in a predominantly pragmatic international system but rather as a normative actor consistently striving for a more just world order.

Normative consistency: Indonesia implementation and official statement

Referring to the 1945 Constitution, the first paragraph affirms that “indeed, independence is the right of all nations, therefore, colonialism in the world must be abolished because it is not in accordance with humanity and justice.” Meanwhile, the fourth paragraph emphasizes Indonesia’s commitment to “...participate in implementing world order based on freedom, eternal peace and social justice.”

These two paragraph not only state universal moral principles but also provide a normative framework for Indonesian diplomacy: all nations have the right to determine their own destiny, free from foreign domination and sovereignty over their territory. This principle is the basis for Indonesia’s consistency in rejecting the opening of diplomatic relations with Israel, while also affirming that Palestinian sovereignty remains a central reference poin in Indonesia’s foreign policy discourse.

This statement is in line with the view of Foreign Minister Retno L. Marsudi who on October 26, 2017, emphasized that "Palestine is the heart of Indonesian foreign policy; every breath of Indonesian diplomacy contains the struggle for Palestine." ([Maryati, 2017](#)). A similar attitude was expressed by President Prabowo Subianto in the Plenary Session of the People's Consultative Assembly of the Republic of Indonesia at his inauguration for the 2024-2029 period, that Indonesia has the principle of being in solidarity and defending oppressed people in the world, including supporting the independence of the Palestinian people ([State Secretary, 2024](#)).

This consistency is reflected in Indonesia's active participation in international forums. At the 5th Extraordinary Summit of the OIC in Jakarta, March 6-7, 2016, which raised the theme Palestine and Al-Quds Ash-Sharif, Indonesia affirmed its commitment to support Palestine ([Irfan & Hafid, 2024](#)). As a member of the UN Security Council (January 1, 2019-December 31, 2020) Indonesia utilized its position to raise humanitarian issues, including Palestine. On January 22, 2019, Indonesia proposed that the Palestine-Israel conflict be a priority with three main emphases: (a) adherence to international law, (b) implementation of a peace process based on international legitimacy, and (c) discontinuation of all forms of violence ([Maurelly et al., 2020](#)). In the Non-Aligned Movement forum on February 19, 2024, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Pahala Mansury again reminded the principles of the Asia-Africa Conference, namely equality, justice, independence, and protection of the rights of developing countries ([Qurrota A'yun et al., 2024](#)).

In addition to multilateral forums, Foreign Minister Retno L. Marsudi actively voiced her support at various diplomatic meetings. To commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at the UN on December 10, 2023, she condemned human rights

violations against the Palestinian people, called for a ceasefire, and encouraged an accountable peace mechanism through an international commission of inquiry.

On February 23, 2024, at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), she affirmed Palestine's right to self-determination in accordance with international law, rejected the Israeli occupation, and demanded legal accountability and compensation for the losses suffered by the Palestinian people ([Qurrota A'yun et al., 2024](#)).

The Ethics of Participation and Global Solidarity

Pancasila, as a state ideology, emerged from the history, culture, and diversity of Indonesian society across its 34 provinces. The fourth and fifth principles emphasize the values of equality, deliberation, and social justice—values that form the basis of Indonesian diplomacy in defending the rights of oppressed nations, including Palestine. The fourth principle directs foreign policy stances to reflect the aspirations of the people through moral wisdom, while the fifth principle embodies the spirit of global solidarity that justice must be upheld at the national and international levels ([Arindra & Nur, 2024](#)).

The implementation of the fourth and fifth principles of Pancasila is evident, among other things, in Indonesia's position conveyed by Foreign Minister Retno L. Marsudi before the UN General Assembly on September 28, 2024, in New York, which condemned injustice against the Palestinian people, highlighted the increasing number of civilian casualties, and called for an immediate cessation of hostilities. Indonesia reiterated its continue support for the Palestinian right to statehood and called for an end to violence for their right to an independent state. The statement emphasized the staggering death toll of over 41,000 in Gaza and the worsening situation in the West Bank and Lebanon, highlighted the discrepancy between statements of peace and ongoing military operations of seeking peace, pointing out the contradiction with Israel's simultaneous massive airstrikes on Beirut. The speech concluded with called for an immediate discontinue of hostilities and compliance with international and humanitarian law ([Muhaimin, 2024](#)).

In line with the principles of humanitarian cooperation, human rights advocacy, and active involvement in UN resolutions and global consensus, Indonesia, along with members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), discussed supporting Palestine's bid to become the 194th member of the UN. These efforts continued September 28, 2012, by encouraging Palestine to be elevated to the UN's status. Finally, in November 2012, Palestine was approved as a non-permanent member of the UN ([Aslamiah, 2015](#)). As a co-sponsor, Indonesia called for the importance of moral and political support for Palestinian independence and urged countries siding with Israel to reconsider their positions and provide concrete support for achieving peace ([Satris, 2019](#)).

On May 9, 2019, at the UN Forum on the Questions of Palestine and the UN Arria Formula Meeting on Israeli Settlements and Settlers Indonesia and South Africa affirmed their rejection of the expansion of illegal Israeli settlements in the Palestinian territories ([Suratiningsih & Puspita, 2020](#)). Foreign Minister Retno L. Marsudi revealed that the number of illegal settlements increased drastically from around 110,000 in September 1993 to 620,000 by the end of 2017 ([Rezasyah,](#)

[2019](#)). This practice includes controlling, limiting, and dominating Palestinian access to natural resources and building infrastructure for unilateral interests. The impact not only limits community activities but also causes significant economic losses because it is used for corporate activities and the production of mining goods ([Amnesty International, 2023](#)).

This practice violates Articles 2 Paragraphs 1 and 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Article 2 Paragraph 2 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and Article 2 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) ([Fachri, 2024](#)). In the humanitarian dimension, on July 2, 2019 at the UN Security Council, Indonesia acted as co-penholders with Kuwait to monitor and report on the conditions in Palestine, coordinate with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and provide financial assistance and protection for children affected by the conflict through collaboration with Save the Children ([Qurrota A'yun et al., 2024](#)).

At the national level, The House of Representatives (DPR) also strengthened its support for Palestine through the Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation Agency (BKSAP) which collaborate bilaterally with the Palestinian Ambassador to Indonesia and multilaterally with the Interparliamentary Union (IPU). Initiated by the Aqsa Working Group (AWG), on October 10, 2023, the BKSAP and the Palestinian Ambassador held a communication meeting to express their rejection of the Israeli bill that would divide the Al-Aqsa Mosque from the Jewish community. Then, at the 148th IPU session in Geneva, Switzerland, Indonesia, along with Malaysia, proposed peaceful diplomacy through parliament with a 20-point resolution, one of which was to stop attacks on public facilities, particularly those related to worship and education ([Rizquallah & Aisyah, 2025](#)).

The challenge of Pluralism and International Pressure

Each state actor fundamentally has its own interests when interacting internationally. These interests often have the potential to spark disputes and even conflict when confronted with other interests, due to differing goals and underlying foreign policy perspectives. However, these differences are not divisive; rather, they reflect the right of each state actor to choose their own decisions and actions based on their own perspectives ([Arindra & Nur, 2024](#)).

In addressing the Palestine-Israel conflict, Indonesia adheres to the principle of an independent and active foreign policy, whereby Indonesian decisions are not influenced by any foreign party or bloc. In its diplomatic practice, Indonesia prioritizes dialogue and cooperation over political pressure. Based on the values of Pancasila, Indonesia positions itself as a mediator amidst the dominance of various groups and inequality between parties in resolving the conflict. This is because Indonesia believes that a conflict managed through good cooperation can ease tensions between the two parties and become an opportunity to open better relations between the two countries ([Muhamad et al., 2025](#)).

As stated by Minister of Foreign Affairs Retno L. Marsudi in the 2024 Foreign Ministerial Press Statement (PPTM) at the Asian-African Conference Museum, Indonesia's support for Palestine is inseparable from pressure from Western countries pushing for Indonesia to open diplomatic

relations with Israel, such as several countries from the Middle East, namely the UAE, Bahrain and Morocco ([Hakiem et al., 2023](#)) On the other hand, there are parties who oppose Indonesia's stance, such as the United States which provides military assistance to Israel or the United Kingdom which has not had a consistent stance in responding to UN resolutions or even the G7 countries which do not take the two-state resolution seriously. However, these situations do not change Indonesia's stance to remain with Palestine, because the principles of justice and human rights are top priorities ([Commonwealth & Development, 2024; Erika & Meiliana, 2024; Indonesia, 2023](#)).

Indonesia's support for Palestine can be traced back to the era of its first president, Soekarno, who actively voiced anti-colonialism and prioritized solidarity, including inviting Palestinians and rejecting diplomatic relations with Israel. This spirit continued during the Soeharto era, through dialogue efforts with Israel and Middle Eastern countries to understand both sides' perspectives on the Palestinian conflict and refusing to implement an oil embargo policy in 1973.

Entering the era of President Habibie's leadership, although Indonesia was plagued by various domestic conflicts, including inter-ethnic tensions, Palestine's commitment remained through active involvement in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). During the era of President Abdurrahman Wahid, there was consideration of establishing diplomatic relations with Israel to strengthen its mediation role with Palestine. However, the plan was cancelled due to concerns that it would disrupt Indonesia's foreign policy direction. During the era of President Megawati, Indonesia proposed bilateral cooperation, while during the era of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY), a meeting was held between President Mahmoud Abbas, the Chairman of Hamas, and the PLO to discuss the conflict directly. Meanwhile, under the leadership of President Joko Widodo, Indonesia succeeded in establishing a Consulate in Ramallah as a liaison for cultural, social and economic cooperation between the two countries ([Fajriyah & Setiawati, 2025](#))

Interpretation of Key Findings

The findings of this study, indicate that Indonesia's consistent support for Palestine is rooted in normative rather than pragmatic considerations. This consistency can be explained by three key factors. First, Indonesia's constitutional mandate and values of Pancasila serve as normative anchors obligating the state to reject colonialism and defend the right to self-determination.

These principles explain the continuity of policy across different administrations. Second, Indonesia's postcolonial identity reinforces solidarity with Palestine. The nation's own experience of colonialism has shaped a political culture that views support for Palestine as a moral duty, not merely strategic option. Third, Indonesia positions itself a normative actor in global forums. By consistently voicing support for Palestine in the UN, OIC, and other platforms, Indonesia strengthens its role as a representative of the Global South committed to justice and human rights, regardless of under pressure from the powerful state. Overall, Indonesia's policy reflects a resilient commitment to ethical principles, constitutional values, postcolonial solidarity and normative leadership – that transcends short-term interests and underscores its vision of a just international order.

Comparison with Previous Studies

Compared to previous works, this research highlights Indonesia's foreign policy toward Palestine as primarily rooted in constitutional mandates, postcolonial identity, and its role as a normative actor in international forums. While earlier studies provide important insights, they tend to emphasize different explanatory factors. For example, Kurniadi (2024) stresses historical solidarity and shared Islamic identity as the foundation of Indonesia–Palestine relations. Similarly, Esperanza and Sukri (2023) underline Indonesia's *bebas-aktif* foreign policy principle, showing how this framework has guided consistent support for Palestine, particularly during Indonesia's tenure as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. Other research also points to political and economic dimensions of solidarity, such as zero-tariff trade policies and humanitarian aid commitments. In contrast, the present study contributes by demonstrating that Indonesia's pro-Palestinian stance is not merely reactive to international developments or based on religious and historical ties. Rather, it is anchored in the constitutional rejection of colonialism, shaped by Indonesia's own postcolonial experience, and reinforced by its pursuit of normative leadership in the Global South. This integrative explanation provides a deeper understanding of why Indonesia's position has remained consistent across different administrations despite shifting global dynamics.

Limitations and Cautions

This study, while offering valuable insights into Indonesia's diplomacy and humanitarian engagement toward Palestine, is subject to several limitations. First, the research relies primarily on qualitative methods and secondary sources, which may restrict the depth of empirical validation. The absence of direct fieldwork or interviews with policymakers and humanitarian actors limits the ability to capture nuanced perspectives and behind-the-scenes dynamics of diplomacy. Second, the temporal scope of the research focuses on specific periods of Indonesian foreign policy, which may not fully reflect long-term trends or policy shifts influenced by changing domestic and international contexts. Third, the study is largely descriptive, emphasizing Indonesia's actions and contributions, but it does not extensively assess the measurable effectiveness of these diplomatic and humanitarian initiatives in achieving substantive policy outcomes for Palestine.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research could address these limitations in several ways. First, scholars should consider incorporating primary data collection, such as in-depth interviews with diplomats, policymakers, and NGO leaders, to enrich the analysis with insider perspectives. Second, a comparative approach examining Indonesia's pro-Palestinian diplomacy alongside that of other Muslim-majority or Global South countries could provide a broader understanding of solidarity-based diplomacy. Third, future studies could adopt impact evaluation frameworks to critically assess whether Indonesia's humanitarian and diplomatic actions produce tangible improvements in Palestinian welfare or influence global decision-making processes. Finally, exploring the role of domestic political discourses, public opinion, and transnational Islamic solidarity movements would offer a

more comprehensive understanding of how internal and external factors interact in shaping Indonesia's foreign policy toward Palestine.

CONCLUSION

This article analyses the consistency of Indonesia's foreign policy on the Palestine–Israel issue, using a normative theory approach in international relations. This approach emphasizes that state actions are not solely driven by strategic interests or material calculations, but also by moral values, ethics, and humanitarian principles. In the context of the Palestine–Israel conflict—rooted in a history of colonial governance and territorial disputes in the region of Gaza that peaked in October 2023—Indonesia has consistently affirmed its support for the Palestinian people's right to independence. This support is reflected in its diplomatic practices, humanitarian aid, and firm positions in various international forums such as the UN and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

Using normative theory, this article demonstrates that Indonesian policy is rooted in the constitutional mandate (UUD 1945) that rejects colonialism, Pancasila values such as just and civilized humanity, and religious principles that promote global peace. In this regard, Indonesia acts not only as a political actor but also as a proponent of oral and humanitarian values in international relations. Indonesia's foreign policy towards Palestine reflects a national identity that combines anti-colonialism with a commitment to international social justice.

Amidst a global order that is increasingly pragmatic and selective in implementing universal values, a normative approach is increasingly relevant to maintain. Indonesia, as part of the Global South, has a strategic role in maintaining the integrity of international norms that contributing to the strengthening of international norms that promote pluralism, justice and humanity.

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