



Indonesia's Foreign Policy Towards Malaysia And Thailand Regarding Rohingya Refugees In Indonesia During The Early Years Of President Joko Widodo's Administration

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Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki bagaimana Indonesia menanggapi Malaysia dan Thailand terkait pengungsi Rohingya selama awal kepemimpinan Presiden Joko Widodo. Dalam menganalisis permasalahan ini, konsep pengungsi dan politik luar negeri digunakan sebagai kerangka penelitian. Pendekatan kualitatif diambil dengan menggunakan data sekunder. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa politik luar negeri Indonesia menerapkan pendekatan multilateral dengan mengadakan pertemuan bersama negara asal, negara transit, dan negara tujuan untuk mengatasi masalah migran tidak teratur, khususnya dengan Malaysia dan Thailand. Indonesia memutuskan untuk secara aktif berpartisipasi dalam pertemuan yang diselenggarakan oleh Malaysia, Thailand, dan Indonesia sendiri. Meskipun pertemuan tersebut tidak sepenuhnya menyelesaikan permasalahan pengungsi Rohingya di Indonesia, namun setidaknya membantu mengurangi jumlah pengungsi Rohingya yang memasuki wilayah perairan Indonesia. Selain itu, bantuan yang diberikan oleh Amerika Serikat dalam pertemuan di Bangkok turut berkontribusi dalam memenuhi kebutuhan dasar pengungsi Rohingya di Aceh.

Kata kunci: Pengungsi, Politik luar Negeri Indonesia, Rohingya, Pendekatan Multilateral

Abstract: This study aims to explore Indonesia's diplomatic approach towards Malaysia and Thailand concerning Rohingya refugees in Indonesia during the early tenure of President Joko Widodo. To analyze this issue, the research employs the concepts of refugees and foreign policy. Utilizing secondary data, this qualitative study reveals that Indonesia's foreign policy adopts a multilateral strategy by engaging in meetings with countries of origin, transit, and destination to address the challenges of irregular migration, particularly with Malaysia and Thailand. Indonesia opted to actively participate in meetings organized by the governments of Malaysia, Thailand and its own government. Although these meetings did not entirely resolve the issues related to

Rohingya refugees in Indonesia, they contributed to alleviating the problem by reducing the influx of Rohingya refugees into Indonesian waters. Furthermore, the assistance the United States provided during the Bangkok meeting helped to meet the basic needs of Rohingya refugees in Aceh.

Keywords: *Refugees, Indonesian Foreign Policy, Rohingya, Multilateral Approach.*

INTRODUCTION

War and conflict have emerged as the primary drivers of an extensive wave of refugees. Individuals caught in conflicts in their home countries are compelled to leave their homeland for safety, seeking refuge in neighboring countries or even further abroad. The phenomenon of displacement is highly relevant in the context of international relations because it involves numerous actors and produces problems that no one country can solve on its own. Consequently, collaborative efforts among actors are essential to address refugee issues, necessitating mechanisms to regulate displacement to prevent an undue burden on transit and destination countries.

Indonesia, serving as a transit country for Rohingya refugees stranded in the Andaman Sea and later rescued by Acehnese fishermen, faces serious challenges in managing and handling these refugees. A report from the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) stated that by the end of 2015, the global refugee population had reached 65.3 million people, an increase from the previous year's 59.5 million (UNHCR Indonesia, 2016). This escalation poses greater challenges, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region, which contributed to nearly one-third of the global refugee total in 2015.

The Asia-Pacific region has become one of the largest hubs of refugee movements, leading to an increase in both internal and cross-border displacement. These factors make the region the third-largest in the world after Sub-Saharan Africa in terms of overall population movements. Therefore, collaborative efforts and effective mechanisms are crucial to addressing refugee problems at both regional and global levels, aiming to provide sustainable solutions.

Table 1. The Number of Refugees under UNHCR Mandate in the Asia-Pacific Region in 2015

Country	Refugees
Afganistan	2,7 million
Myanmar	451.800

Source: UNHCR Indonesia 2016

There is already a mechanism governing refugees, namely the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a UN agency established to provide international protection to refugees. Its programs and activities are formulated and implemented based on the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (CRSR)/1967 Protocol, an international agreement that defines the criteria for refugees, the rights of individuals recognized as asylum-seekers, and the responsibilities of the state granting asylum (Ashari, 2015, p.15). Every country that is a party to this convention is obligated to protect refugees within its territory. In Southeast Asia, only Cambodia, the Philippines, and Timor-Leste have ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention (Amnesty International, 2015). Meanwhile, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand have not done so. Despite not ratifying the 1951 Refugee Convention, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand have, in legal and humanitarian terms, applied the key principles of the convention. This is reflected in actions such as non-refoulement, non-expulsion, and non-discrimination against refugees within Indonesia's territory.

Indonesia has made a tangible and significant contribution to protecting refugees within its territory. As an asylum provider in the region, Indonesia has accommodated refugees from various humanitarian crises, such as in the 1970s when refugees from Vietnam were rescued and placed on Galang Island. Despite being situated among refugee-receiving countries like Malaysia, Thailand, and Australia, Indonesia consistently faces the impacts of diverse population movements. For instance, with the arrival of Rohingya ethnic refugees from Myanmar, who have been continuously arriving in Indonesia in recent years.

From the data in the table below, it can be observed that the number of refugees in Indonesia has increased since 2009. The majority of asylum-seekers come from Afghanistan, Somalia, and Myanmar. Indonesia continues to play an active role in managing refugees and making a positive contribution in the context of international protection for those in need.

Table 2. The Total Arrival of Asylum Seekers Registering with UNHCR Indonesia from 2008 to 2015

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Amount	385	3,230	3,905	4,052	7,223	8,332	5,659	4,426

Sumber: UNHCR Indonesia, 2015

The arrival of Rohingya refugees began on January 7, 2009, when approximately 193 Rohingya refugees were stranded on Weh Island, Sabang. On February 3, 2009, a total of 198 individuals from the same group also landed in Idi Rayeuk, East Aceh (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2009). On February 15, 2011, 129 Rohingya asylum seekers landed in Aceh after enduring a perilous journey at sea for nearly three weeks (UNHCR Indonesia, 2015). In May 2015, nearly 2,000 refugees and migrants from Myanmar and Bangladesh arrived in Aceh and North Sumatra Province. While some were able to find their routes, Acehnese fishermen saved the majority of them. The Indonesian government and residents provided emergency humanitarian assistance in various areas of Aceh, including Lhoksukon, Kuala Cangkoi, Kuala Langsa, Bayeun, Kuala Simpang, and also in Langkat (which later relocated to Medan) in North Sumatra (UNHCR Indonesia, 2015).

The Rohingya ethnic group holds a significant position in Indonesia due to their shared beliefs with the majority of the Muslim population. Furthermore, in the context of the nation's moral principles and fundamental constitutional values, the Rohingya issue is of importance. Myanmar, being a newly transitioning democracy, remains entangled in human rights violations. Under the military junta regime, the movement and freedom of the Rohingya ethnic group are severely restricted, and their citizenship is systematically and massively revoked. The Rohingya face harsh and discriminatory treatment from their government, with a large portion of them

not recognized as citizens of Myanmar. This situation compels them to seek refuge in search of a secure place, with the hope of beginning a new life in a third country that offers better prospects. These human rights violations have captured the attention of Indonesia, which is directly impacted by the influx of refugees from Myanmar.

Table 3. The chronological account of the rescue and arrival onshore in Aceh of Rohingya and Bangladeshi citizens since the year 2009.

15 Mei 2015	197 Rohingya in Sabang Aceh
3 Februariy2009	198 Rohingya and Bangladeshi in Kuala Idi, East Aceh
1 February 2012	54 Rohingya in Kreung Geukeuh, North Aceh
26 February 2013	127 Rohingya in Muara Batu, North Aceh
28 February 2013	63 Rohingya in Kuala Idi, East Aceh
7 April 2013	80 Rohingya in Pulo Aceh, Aceh
29 Juli 2013	68 Rohingya in Teunom, Aceh Jaya (on their way from Malaysia to Australia)
10 Mei 2015	582 Rohingya and Bangladeshi in Seuneudon, North Aceh
15 Mei 2015	682 Rohingya and Bangladeshi in Pusong
15 Mei 2015	49 Rohingya and Bangladeshi in Kuala Simpang, AcehTaimang
1 Mei 2015	342 Rohingya and 67 Bangladeshi in Julok, East Aceh

Source: Yayasan Geutanyoe, 2016

The Rohingya ethnic group constitutes a minority Muslim population in Myanmar, a predominantly Buddhist nation. The Myanmar government denies Rohingya ethnicity citizenship, considering them to originate from Bangladesh and bear physical similarities to South Asian rather than Southeast Asian populations. Before 1962, the Rohingya ethnicity was officially recognized in Myanmar. However, following the military takeover, their status underwent systematic changes, particularly with the implementation of the 1982 Citizenship Law, which revoked the citizenship status of the Rohingya ethnic minority.

The escalating influx of Rohingya refugees in recent years, particularly towards three transit countries, has given rise to various issues in these nations. While Aceh provides aid and support to Rohingya refugees, anti-Rohingya sentiments surface in Thailand. Thai citizens reject the government's plan to place

Rohingya refugees in camps or forest settlements, reflecting xenophobia and concerns about the Muslim population's growth. Some Rohingya refugees in Aceh even flee to Malaysia, contributing to the refugee population in that country. The presence of a large number of refugees and asylum seekers can lead to several social problems, including fulfillment of basic needs, assimilation with the local community, and social impacts such as drug-related issues and Christianization.

To address these challenges, Indonesia needs to implement domestic and foreign policy measures. During Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's leadership, Indonesia pursued policies involving support for humanitarian institutions and civil organizations assisting Rohingya refugees. Foreign policy also encompassed efforts toward sustainable economic and democratization approaches. Under Joko Widodo's leadership, the Indonesian government provided emergency responses, offering shelter, food, and medical aid. Indonesia also collaborated with Malaysia and Thailand to find collective solutions. President Joko Widodo emphasized that humanitarian considerations were the driving force behind Indonesia's decision to host refugees for a year with the option of repatriation to their home country or acceptance by another country. The Indonesian government acknowledges that the Rohingya refugee crisis impacts not only humanitarian aspects but also regional security stability and Indonesia's economic growth. Therefore, Indonesia remains actively vocal on the issue, striving to find collaborative solutions for a conducive regional environment. Based on the outlined problem background, this research formulates a research question: "*How do Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand respond to the Rohingya refugee issue, particularly in Indonesia, and its impact on Indonesia's foreign policy towards Thailand and Malaysia?*"

Theoretical Framework

The surge in refugees is propelled by conflicts, compelling individuals to seek refuge both domestically and internationally. Resolving this issue necessitates collaboration from various stakeholders, as the unsustainability of resolving it solely within one country burdens nations serving as transit points or ultimate destinations. Despite not being a party to the Refugee Convention, Indonesia bears a moral responsibility to humanity, particularly towards the Rohingya ethnic

minority facing systematic discrimination by the Myanmar government. Consequently, the Indonesian government should play an active role in addressing this situation.

In this research, the author employs the concepts of refugees and foreign policy as an analytical framework to elucidate how Indonesia's foreign policy responds to the Rohingya refugee phenomenon.

The Concept of Refugees

The concept of refugees, as elucidated by Ashari (2015), encompasses two main categories: recognized refugees and mandated refugees. Recognized refugees refer to individuals outside their home country seeking asylum or protection due to the risk of murder or violence based on race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, social membership, political beliefs, or knowledge possessed. On the other hand, mandated refugees are individuals eligible for refugee status according to the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees in 1951 and the Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees in 1967. Mandated refugees have the right to protection from the United Nations (UN) and this status can be granted by both party and non-party states to these conventions, with designation by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Asylum seekers, on the contrary, are individuals who leave their home country and claim refugee status but still await official determination by the UNHCR. The UNHCR can grant refugee status if there is verification that the individual meets the criteria, such as facing safety threats in their home country due to beliefs or ethnic differences. If the UNHCR determines that an asylum seeker does not qualify as a refugee, the host country has the right to return them to their home country through voluntary repatriation or forced deportation.

The Rohingya ethnic minority in Myanmar, facing inhospitable conditions in their home country, has become refugees seeking a better life, designating Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand as transit countries. With similar issues in Malaysia and Thailand, Indonesia can play a role in foreign diplomacy to address the Rohingya refugee problem alongside these two nations.

Foreign Policy

According to Breuning, foreign policy can be interpreted as the overall manifestation of a state when interacting with countries beyond its territorial boundaries. In this interaction, various crucial issues, including those within diverse territories, will be discussed. Breuning divides the concept of foreign policy into three main areas of study: decisions, behaviors, and outcomes (Breuning, 2007, p. 7). Before entering the realm of decisions, decision-makers in foreign policy are confronted with various choices that serve as options for the leaders of a country. Subsequently, foreign policy will be determined based on the range of available choices, and the decision will be made by the government as the state entity.

Behaviors in the context of foreign policy encompass tangible actions as a consequence of the decisions made. These actions can take the form of clear stances, including actions taken to influence external actors or to secure advantages for the country. The dynamics of the conditions and political situations within a country serve as indicators to assess actions translated into the governing system and relations with the domestic society. The impacts arising from decisions and actions in foreign policy are measured as responses or reactions from the international environment, and these outcomes fall within the category of Outcomes. Thus, foreign policy involves a cycle of decisions, actions, and outcomes that reflect the state's interaction with the outside world.

METHODS

This research applies a qualitative method, involving a detailed analysis of a specific background or event. This type of research is descriptive, where the descriptive method is employed to examine the status of human groups, objects, conditions, thought systems, or classes of events in the present. The purpose of this descriptive approach is to present accurate descriptions, systematic depictions, facts, and relationships among phenomena.

In conducting the research, the data research method utilized is document analysis. The data is obtained through a literature review, encompassing the study of books, journals, research reports, studies, and newspapers. Additionally, online

searches are conducted to gather data and information related to this research. This approach enables the researcher to detail and present information systematically, aiding in the depiction of facts and relationships among the phenomena under investigation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Rohingya Refugees in Indonesia

Director of the Rohingya-Arakan Information and Advocacy Center (PIARA), Heri Aryanto, notes that the distribution of Rohingya refugees arriving in Indonesia is not direct from Myanmar to Indonesia. Firstly, some Rohingya refugees arrive in Indonesia after first passing through Malaysia and settling there. Reasons for relocating to Indonesia include the inability to access education in Malaysia and the hope for a better life, including aspirations to become Indonesian citizens through marriage with Indonesian women. Secondly, the boats used by Rohingya refugees end up in Indonesia because their initial destination was supposed to be Malaysia and Australia. Thirdly, Rohingya refugees are deceived by boat captains (human smugglers) who promise to take them to Australia, both from Malaysia and Myanmar.

In the distribution of their arrival in Indonesian territory, Rohingya refugees are often stranded in several locations, either because they were captured or intentionally surrendered to Indonesian Immigration authorities in areas close to Malaysia or Myanmar. These locations include Aceh, Medan, Tanjung Pinang, Batam (Riau Islands), as well as Kupang – East Nusa Tenggara, Serang – Banten, and Banyuwangi – East Java. The condition of hunger compels some Rohingya to intentionally surrender to Indonesian immigration authorities in the hope of receiving food assistance. Aceh Province, due to its geographic proximity to Myanmar, has become the primary arrival point for Rohingya.

Rohingya ethnicity can be considered as recognized refugees, meaning asylum seekers still awaiting refugee status determination from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). They are outside their home country

seeking protection due to threats of murder and violence in their home country. Specifically, they can be considered mandated refugees, eligible for refugee status based on the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, considering their experiences with discrimination, murder, and violence in their home country.

Determinants of Conflict

Historical Factors

The perspectives on the origins of Rohingya history differ. Rohingya is an ethnic group residing in the Rakhine (Arakan) state of Myanmar. The ancestors of the Rohingya have roots in a mix of Arab, Turkish, Persian, Afghan, Bengali, and Indo-Mongoloid heritage. The term "Rohingya" originates from "Rohang," an ancient name for "Arakan," which later became associated with the people inhabiting that region (FSI FEBUI, 2015). Arakan was previously ruled by Hindu kingdoms, Islam during the 15th-18th centuries, and Buddhism before joining the Union of Myanmar in 1948. The name "Arakan" changed to "Rakhine" in 1930 and later also referred to as "Rakhaing," specifically denoting the Rakhine Buddhist ethnicity (Moghs) and excluding the Rohingya Muslim ethnicity (FSI FEBUI, 2015).

Divergent views emerge regarding whether Rohingya are considered indigenous to Myanmar or as Muslim immigrants originating from Bengal, who settled in Arakan during British colonial rule. A significant portion of Myanmar's population, especially the Burmese ethnic group, perceives the Rohingya as Bangladeshi inhabitants who migrated to Myanmar. Due to Arakan's proximity to Bangladesh, they are regarded as Bangladeshis rather than native Myanmar residents. However, alternative perspectives, such as those presented by Myanmar political activist Soe Aung, assert that the Rohingya ethnicity is distinct from Bangladeshis or Bengali ethnicity, representing a group with a clear history and roots in the region (Bonasir, 2015; Ferida, 2016).

Since before Burma's independence in 1948, the Rohingya ethnicity has faced discrimination and oppression from both the state and the majority ethnic groups in Myanmar. They have been subject to violence and are considered a minority. After Burma gained independence, its status became ambiguous as the Myanmar government asserted that the Rohingya ethnicity did not qualify for citizenship under the 1982 military law. This rendered them stateless, losing citizen rights such as access to education, healthcare, and religious freedom (Bonasir, 2015). This issue also has economic dimensions, where the Rohingya are viewed as an additional economic burden, competing for jobs and business opportunities in Rakhine, mostly controlled by the Burmese elite (FSI FEBUI, 2015).

Conflict Trigger Factors

In 2012, a racial conflict erupted in Myanmar between the Rakhine and Rohingya ethnic groups. The conflict was triggered by a series of events, including the rape and murder of a Rakhine girl by several Rohingya youths. Subsequently, this event led to retaliatory actions, where ten Rohingya youths were killed in a bus by individuals from the Rakhine community.

The initial catalyst for the conflict was the rape and murder of a Rakhine woman by three Rohingya youths of the Islamic faith in the Kyaukpyu region of Rakhine Province (Arakan) on May 28, 2012. This act incited the anger of the Rakhine community, who felt that the incident had openly violated the dignity of Rakhine women. Six days after this event, on June 3, 2012, in another location, namely Taungup in the Thandwe region of Rakhine Province (Arakan), 30 Rakhine individuals attacked a bus in retaliation for the events of May 28, resulting in the deaths of 10 people perceived to be of Rohingya descent. On June 8, 2012, in a different location, thousands of Rohingya in Maungdaw engaged in riots, damaging homes and killing several Rakhine residents in Maungdaw. The conflict created tension between the two ethnic groups and exacerbated the humanitarian situation in the region.

Reasons for Rohingya Refugees Undertaking Migration.

During President Thein Sein's leadership, the condition of the Rohingya did not undergo significant changes. Thein Sein refused to recognize the Rohingya as part of Myanmar, stating that "Rohingya are not our citizens, and we have no obligation to protect them." This statement reflects Thein Sein's regime's rejection of Rohingya identity as an ethnic group in Myanmar. Furthermore, Thein Sein referred to the Rohingya in Arakan as a "threat to national security."

The conflict between the Myanmar government and the Rohingya has become increasingly complex. The government's refusal to acknowledge the Rohingya has transformed the conflict from a vertical one, between the government and the Rohingya, into a horizontal conflict between the majority Rakhine population and the Rohingya. The government appears to let this conflict persist to legitimize the expulsion and destruction of the Rohingya from Arakan.

President Thein Sein desired the ethnic Rohingya to be managed by UNHCR or resettled in a third country. This contradicts the assurances given by General Aung San in 1946, granting privileges to the Rohingya as native inhabitants of Arakan and emphasizing the importance of unity in Myanmar. In 2014, the Myanmar government officially banned the use of the term "Rohingya" and classified Rohingya people as "Bengali" in its population census. In March 2015, the government revoked the identity cards of Rohingya, leading to the loss of citizenship and political rights. Reports from the human rights organization Fortify Rights revealed the involvement of the Myanmar government in harsh and discriminatory policies against the Rohingya since 1993. Secret documents published indicated that Myanmar officials instructed authorities in Rakhine to implement restrictive policies against the Rohingya.

All these actions are discriminatory and seem designed to expel the Rohingya from Myanmar. The roles of political and intellectual actors, akin to Julius Streicher in Nazi Germany's anti-Jewish propaganda, are also evident in the Myanmar case, where some individuals support hate campaigns and rejection of the Rohingya. The revocation of identity cards became a contributing factor for

Rohingya to seek refuge. The conflict situation, history of racial unrest, and concerns about their security in Myanmar further exacerbate conditions, prompting many Rohingya to risk their lives through sea voyages to Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

The Rohingya Refugee Issue in Indonesia

In general, Indonesia has not ratified the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, thus lacking formal obligations to accept refugees as citizens or provide official protection. In this context, addressing the Rohingya refugee crisis in Indonesia becomes more complex due to the absence of specific regulations governing it. Several factors contribute to refugees and asylum seekers not receiving effective protection in Indonesia. First, adequate legal protection is deficient. Indonesia's legal framework related to asylum seekers and refugees often categorizes them as illegal immigrants, subject to deportation. The lack of access to decent living conditions, employment, and education poses significant challenges for Rohingya refugees in Indonesia.

Second, the determination of refugee status involves the UNHCR, and the limited capacity of the UNHCR results in a prolonged process of status determination and resettlement. This has implications for legal uncertainty for refugees, restricting their access to social services and creating risks of human rights violations. In 2010, the Director-General of Immigration in Indonesia issued an instruction that asylum seekers or refugees must be referred to the UNHCR for status determination. Despite the UNHCR operating in Indonesia with government permission, its limited capacity leads to slow handling and delays in the status determination process.

Despite challenges in addressing the Rohingya refugee situation in Indonesia, the Indonesian government has shown a commendable response in terms of reception and accommodation. Government efforts in handling this issue reflect humanitarian policies, although there are still challenges to be addressed, particularly concerning legal protection and the human rights of the refugees.

Responses of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand Regarding Rohingya Refugees

The arrival situation of Rohingya refugees has indeed raised various issues, and the responses from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand differ in their approaches. Despite Indonesia not having ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention, it provided a positive response by accommodating Rohingya refugees in various regions of Aceh. This reception resulted from an agreement reached during the Trilateral meeting on May 20 in Putrajaya, Malaysia. However, Indonesia did not offer formal education and employment to Rohingya refugees as it is not a party to the refugee convention.

Similarly, Malaysia responded favorably by placing Rohingya refugees in the Belantik Detention Center in Kedah. This reception also resulted from a Trilateral agreement. Like Indonesia, Malaysia did not provide formal education and employment to Rohingya refugees. On the other hand, Thailand did not follow the lead of Indonesia and Malaysia. Thailand is considered less accommodating as it rejected Rohingya refugees entering its territory. Thailand's response may be more stringent, and they claim to have previously accommodated many Rohingya refugees.

Overall, the responses from these three countries have their respective advantages and disadvantages. The main issue faced is the inability to grant official rights, such as education and employment, to Rohingya refugees because they are not members of the 1951 Refugee Convention. Addressing this challenge requires regional cooperation and collaborative solutions to tackle the Rohingya refugee issue.

Table 4. Comparative Responses of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand to Rohingya Refugees

Response	Indonesia	Malaysia	Thailand
Acceptance	Good	Good	Poor
Shelter	Good	Good	Poor
Assistance	Good	Good	Good

Source: UNHCR, 2015

Positive Responses from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand towards Rohingya Refugees Set an Example for Other Countries in Southeast Asia, especially the Philippines, Cambodia, and Timor-Leste, which are Parties to the Refugee Convention. Although the first three countries have not ratified the convention, their responses are grounded in humanitarian principles. These responses could serve as inspiration for other nations to provide assistance and refuge to Rohingya refugees. The trio demonstrates that, in addressing the refugee crisis, actions based on humanity can serve as a crucial foundation in responding to this complex issue.

Indonesia, being directly impacted by irregular movements of people, adopts a proactive policy in its foreign affairs. The decision to accommodate Rohingya refugees is also part of Indonesia's efforts to bring this issue to the international stage. Through bilateral and multilateral meetings, Indonesia seeks to establish cooperation with neighboring countries and international partners to address the Rohingya refugee issue more comprehensively. With these positive examples, it is hoped that other countries in the region will be more open to regional cooperation and willing to provide humanitarian assistance to Rohingya refugees.

Multilateral Approach in Indonesia's Foreign Policy Towards Thailand and Malaysia Regarding Rohingya Refugees in Indonesia

Indonesia's participation in multilateral meetings concerning the Rohingya refugee crisis demonstrates the government's commitment to actively engage in resolving humanitarian issues at the regional level. Several meetings, including the Trilateral meeting on May 20th in Putrajaya, Malaysia, the Special Meeting on Irregular Migration in the Indian Ocean in Bangkok, and the ASEAN Ministerial Emergency Meeting on "Transnational Crime Concerning Irregular Movement of Persons in Southeast Asia," reflect the totality of Indonesia's foreign policy in interacting with neighboring countries, particularly Malaysia and Thailand, both of which are also involved in the Rohingya refugee issue.

These meetings underscore Indonesia's commitment to multilateral cooperation, aiming to generate collective solutions to address the Rohingya refugee problem in Southeast Asia. The multilateral approach is chosen because the Rohingya refugee issue is a complex problem that cannot be resolved by a single

country alone. Coordination and collaboration among countries, including the country of origin, transit countries, and destination countries, are essential to effectively address the refugee issue. Indonesia, through its active participation in international forums, contributes to efforts aimed at fostering peace and justice, particularly for the Rohingya ethnic group in Myanmar.

Marjike Breuning's foreign policy approach, which divides foreign policy into decisions, actions, and outcomes, can be applied to understand the steps taken by Indonesia. The decision to engage in multilateral meetings, actions supporting collective solutions, and expectations for outcomes that enhance the security and well-being of Rohingya refugees are elements observable in Indonesia's involvement.

Decisions

The decision of the Indonesian government to accommodate Rohingya refugees is a step taken after careful consideration of various available options. This decision reflects aspects of decision-making within the framework of foreign policy, where the Indonesian government takes into account the humanitarian implications and its impact on Indonesia's image in the eyes of the international community.

Initially, Indonesia faced criticism from the international community due to its initial policy of rejecting Rohingya refugees and encouraging their return to the open sea. This decision changed following pressure and criticism, leading to a commitment to accept and shelter Rohingya refugees. The Indonesian government also set conditions that refugees must be relocated to a third country or repatriated within one year.

Although this step was taken on humanitarian grounds, it brings its own set of impacts and challenges for the Indonesian government. There are legal issues related to refugees in Indonesia, including the process of relocating them to a third country involving cooperation with Malaysia and Thailand. Therefore, a multilateral approach is the solution chosen by Indonesia, manifested through joint meetings with Malaysia and Thailand, aiming to find collective solutions and respond to Rohingya refugee issues collectively at the regional level. This approach

can also help address the legal and administrative challenges that arise with the policy of accepting Rohingya refugees in Indonesia.

Behaviors

The meeting with Malaysia and Thailand has brought positive consequences in addressing the Rohingya refugee issue in Indonesia. Various concrete actions taken by the Indonesian government include support for basic needs, determination of status, resettlement processes, and shelter provision for Rohingya refugees, particularly in the Aceh Province. These actions reflect the commitment of the Indonesian government to follow up on responses to the Rohingya refugee crisis. At the national level, the conditions and situations in Indonesia support the government's actions. The significant support and concern from the Indonesian public regarding events in Rakhine, Myanmar, create positive pressure on the government to take tangible steps in handling the Rohingya refugee issue.

Indonesia's approach to Malaysia and Thailand has yielded positive results in gaining support and understanding from neighboring countries regarding the Rohingya refugee issue. While not fully resolving the problem, these meetings serve as a platform to convey the issue to other nations and international organizations, including Malaysia and Thailand. These steps are also consistent with Indonesia's foreign policy principles based on totality, where the government actively engages with other nations and international forums to seek collective solutions. Thus, these multilateral meetings can serve as an initial step in addressing the root causes of the issue and mitigating the humanitarian impact faced by Rohingya refugees in the Indonesian region.

Outcomes

The Indonesian government's actions in conducting foreign policy through a multilateral approach towards Malaysia and Thailand have had tangible positive impacts in addressing the Rohingya refugee crisis in Indonesia. Some concrete outcomes of this approach include:

1. Search and Rescue (SAR) Operations: Malaysia and Thailand promptly initiated SAR operations following a meeting in Putrajaya, Malaysia. This

reflects the principle of burden-sharing, with both Malaysia and Thailand actively involved in rescuing Rohingya refugees still at sea. SAR operations were conducted to prevent the transfer of the burden to Indonesia.

2. Assistance from the United States (US): During a meeting in Bangkok, the US provided aid to meet the basic needs of Rohingya refugees in Aceh. Additionally, the US expressed willingness to be a third-country for resettlement, involving 137 Rohingya refugees in 2016.
3. International Forums: Meetings in Putrajaya, Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, and Jakarta exemplify Indonesia's comprehensive foreign policy. Through international forums, Indonesia seeks to address the Rohingya refugee issue by engaging relevant countries.
4. Trilateral Agreements: During a meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand agreed on concrete steps, including search operations, humanitarian aid, enhanced cooperation with UNHCR and IOM, and the activation of resources from the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre).
5. Internal Conditions: The support and concern of the Indonesian public regarding events in Rakhine, Myanmar, exert positive pressure on the government to take tangible steps in addressing Rohingya refugees.

Indonesia's multilateral approach, through meetings with Malaysia and Thailand, contributes to creating collective solutions to address the impact of the Rohingya refugee crisis in Indonesia. While not fully resolving the issue, these measures reflect Indonesia's commitment to addressing humanitarian challenges and advocating for international-level solutions.

Resolution of Root Causes of Illegal Immigration

Indonesia, in response to the refugee crisis in Southeast Asia, spearheaded an initiative to address the root causes through a roundtable meeting. The Jakarta Declaration Roundtable Meeting on Addressing the Root Causes of Irregular Movement of Persons on November 27-28, 2015, involved representatives from 13

countries and five international organizations. Participating countries included Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand, and Iran. The international organizations involved comprised the International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Bali Process Regional Support Office (RSO).

This meeting produced concrete initiatives in regional cooperation to tackle the root causes of irregular migration. Indonesia's commitment to addressing human smuggling and trafficking is reflected in its foreign policy, which emphasizes multilateral cooperation. A comprehensive and balanced approach, incorporating law enforcement and humanitarian aspects, forms the foundation, with a focus on prevention, early detection, victim protection, and action against perpetrators.

At this level, Indonesia employs two main concepts in dealing with irregular migration. The first principle is burden-sharing, where countries collaborate to find solutions without shifting the burden to others. The second principle is shared responsibility, emphasizing joint responsibility among countries of origin, transit, and destination in handling irregular migration. The importance of cooperation in multilateral forums is evident from Indonesia's participation in the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons, and Related Transnational Crimes. In this framework, Indonesia actively initiates efforts to strengthen regional cooperation in border management, victim protection, and the development of safe migration pathways.

The positive impact of the collaboration, especially in these meetings, is evident in the handling of irregular migration issues and transboundary crimes, particularly concerning Rohingya refugees in Indonesia. Search and rescue operations conducted by Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand have successfully saved the lives of refugees at sea. The burden-sharing principle is realized by avoiding the transfer of burdens between countries, and collective efforts continue to achieve sustainable solutions in addressing irregular migration. Indonesia's foreign policy, in this context, aligns with President Jokowi's Nawacita vision, emphasizing

Indonesia's role in global and regional cooperation to achieve world peace and security.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the initial data, the conflict in the Rakhine region and discrimination against the Rohingya community in Myanmar have triggered a significant influx of Rohingya refugees. As a minority Muslim group, they face unsafe conditions and discriminatory treatment in Myanmar, compelling them to seek refuge in neighboring countries, including Indonesia. The conflict between the Rakhine and Rohingya ethnicities, coupled with the Myanmar government's denial of Rohingya citizenship status, has resulted in a refugee crisis involving Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand.

Rohingya refugees arrive in Indonesia through various routes, including via Malaysia or stranded boats from Myanmar. The province of Aceh has become a primary destination due to its geographical proximity to Myanmar. The year 2015 witnessed a wave of Rohingya refugees reaching Aceh's waters, posing challenges related to basic needs and lengthy status determination processes.

Indonesia's response to this issue is carried out through foreign policy with a multilateral approach. The meeting in Putrajaya, Malaysia, in May 2015, reflects the decision of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand to jointly address the refugee crisis. In terms of action, Indonesia and Malaysia are willing to accommodate refugees with the condition that they be placed in a third country or repatriated within one year. Thailand, although unwilling to accommodate, continues to assist refugees at sea. Indonesia's foreign policy in this context reflects a collaborative approach with neighboring countries through multilateral forums to address the Rohingya refugee issue. This approach aligns with the principles of foreign policy that emphasize decisions, actions, and outcomes achievable through regional cooperation.

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