

# Should We Worry about China? China's Outward FDI and Aid in Indonesia

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**Keywords:** foreign direct investment, dependency, foreign policy, foreign aid.

**Abstract:** Based on data from the Investment Coordinating Board (BKPM), Chinese investment in Indonesia has increased significantly in recent years. The number of Chinese investments increased 12 percent in 2017 and shifted Japan's position as the second largest investor in Indonesia after Singapore. Indonesia's foreign debt to China also increased. Between 2010 and 2016, Indonesia's debt to China increased six times. It is the largest compared to the average increase of Indonesian debt to other countries that is only 1.3 points. This situation raises concerns that Indonesia's foreign policy will benefit China a lot. This concern is justified because there is no binding agreement beyond economic cooperation. Departing from this issue, research discusses whether the level of investment and large debt to China will affect the independence of Indonesia's foreign policy. The study was conducted in the period of 2014 to 2018 during Joko Widodo presidency.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Chinese investment in Indonesia is increasing. The Investment Coordinating Board (BKPM) noted that China is the second largest investor in Indonesia after Singapore. The amount of Chinese investment in Indonesia in 2017 was US\$ 5.5 billion, up 12% from the previous year which amounted to US\$ 4.9 billion (The Jakarta Post, January 24, 2018). For the size of ASEAN, China's investment in Indonesia is the most. Based on data from BMI Research in 2017, there are 46 projects supported by China in Indonesia; meanwhile 31 projects are in Laos, 30 projects are in Vietnam and Malaysia, 20 projects are in Cambodia, 12 projects are in Singapore, 7 projects are in Philippines, 6 projects are in Myanmar, and 5 projects are in Thailand (Salikha 2018).

The flood of Chinese investment in the region is almost inevitable. Data at the end of 2013 shows that China is at number three in the world's largest investor country for FDI of US\$ 101 billion (Wang, Qi, Zhang 2015). According to China's Ministry of Commerce in 2014, Chinese companies invested US\$ 116 billion in 156 countries. China's ODI growth is between 19-22% since 2013 (Wang 2014). It is also projected that China's investment is growing as shown in Figure 1.

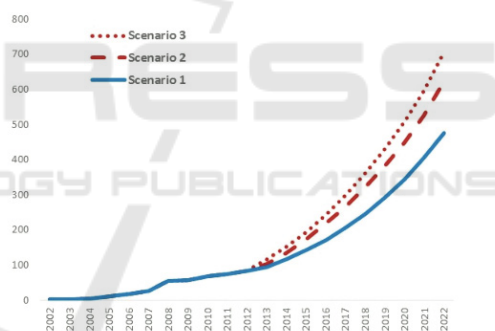


Figure 1: Growth Estimation of Chinese ODI 2013-2022 (US\$ billion)

China currently has a lot of money and big markets. China is geographically close to ASEAN countries. ASEAN is seen as providing many low-cost manufacturing industries, a market that continues to grow and is in line with Xi Jinping government's goal of reviving the silk trade route which is the channel of intercontinental infrastructure linking Europe, Central Asia, South Asia and Southeast Asia. For ASEAN countries, China's investment is needed to strengthen fiscal savings and infrastructure spending. The United States and Western European economies that have not fully developed due to the global crisis in 2008 left China as a major player in global financing through AIIB (Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank) and FDI (Foreign Direct

Investment) flows. Moreover, China through Belt Road Initiatives introduced in 2013 by President Xi Jinping provides a lot of potential infrastructure cooperation which includes overland "Silk Road Economic Belt" and sea-based "Maritime Silk Road". BRI's proposals in the future also include non-infrastructure investment, namely cultural ties and people-to-people exchanges (Hillman 2018).

President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) captured this opportunity. President Jokowi stressed the importance of infrastructure development to accelerate economic growth. China's investment in Indonesia is mostly in mining, infrastructure and tourism. On the occasion of meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping May 14, 2017, Jokowi invited the Chinese Government to cooperate on three mega projects. The three-mega projects are located in North Sumatra, namely the construction of the Kuala Tanjung Port facility and the Medan-Sibolga toll road; in North Sulawesi, namely the construction of road infrastructure, railways, ports and airports in Bitung-Manado-Gorontalo; in North Kalimantan, namely energy investment and construction of a 7200 megawatt power plant. On the same occasion, the Government of Indonesia and the Government of China also signed several documents, namely 2017-2021 Indonesia-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, China Economic and Technical Cooperation, and Jakarta-Bandung rapid train project (setkab.go.id).

Based on BKPM records during 2004-2015 there are about 2500 direct investment projects from China and 1100 projects from Hongkong. This amount is even greater considering that Chinese companies are also channeling their investments through Singapore. In addition Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) will also spread to sectors outside of mining such as property and e-commerce. The involvement of Chinese companies in Indonesia are through two mechanisms: FDI mechanisms and mechanisms of the BRI. A large number of companies are involved because they take part in the Belt and Road Initiative.

The magnitude of FDI can boost the economy (Korbin 2005; Morisset & Pirnia 2001). FDI offers several advantages: (1) technology transfer and capability; (2) opening employment opportunities for communities in receiving countries; (3) encouraging the privatization and commercialization of SOEs; (4) FDI is deemed able to maintain the exchange rate because the incoming FDI equals the entry money for the country; (5) generating sustainable economic activity; (6) creating cooperation with local businesses, for example through joint-ventures; (7) infrastructure development in recipient countries; (8)

receiving countries benefit from CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) run by foreign corporations residing in the country (Onyeiwu tt).

On the one hand Nunnenkamp & Spatz (2004) argues that there is no empirical evidence that foreign investment has a direct impact on growth. Herzer et al (2006) adds that foreign investment in the short run does indeed contribute to economic growth but in the long run there is no correlation. Milanovic (2002) states similar argument by saying that there is no relationship between foreign investments with the increase of people's income. There are other indicators that need to be developed. These indicators are trading volume (De Mello, 1999); domestic market, competition level and human capital (Balasubramanyan et al, 1996); government regulations, the development of other economic sectors and industry readiness in the country (Agosin & Mayer, 2000).

The magnitude of Chinese foreign investment and aid has led to consequences such as the increasing number of Indonesia's foreign debt to China which rose by 6 times between 2010 and 2016. It is the greatest increase in comparison with the average increase in debt to other countries outside China is only 1.3 times. Second, Chinese contractors and sub contractors seek and obtain raw materials and equipment from suppliers in China and do not use local suppliers. Third, about half of the Chinese experts working in Indonesia are employed in the construction sector (Kong & van de Eng 2018). Additionally, the dominance of investment and debt are feared will affect the independence of Indonesian foreign policy.

Departing from the above background, this study aims to find a correlation whether the dominance of investment from China affect the independence of foreign policy of Indonesia against China. This study was limited to Jokowi presidency. During his presidency in 2014, Chinese investment in Indonesia and Indonesia's debt to China increased rapidly. The study found that Indonesian foreign policy tends to be pragmatic and utilizes its position as a middle power that leads to great power of the region. With this position Jokowi is more hedging in the face of China. Indonesia's hedging attitude is influenced by the domestic political situation. Jokowi's political opponents mostly play the issues of China and Chinese Indonesians by utilizing the still high stereotypes over China and Chinese Indonesians in public and domestic elites.

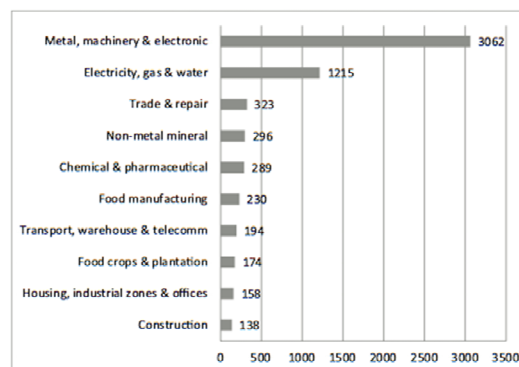
## 2 METHOD

This study focuses on the relationship between foreign investment and foreign policy. This type of research uses descriptive research type as an attempt to explain and interpret a particular phenomenon, problem or behavior. In this study the authors aim to explain how the dominance of foreign investment affect the independence of foreign policy of the recipient country to the donor country. FDI in question is FDI from China. The foreign policy in question is the foreign policy of Indonesia during Jokowi's reign of China, both bilaterally and multilaterally. Data are presented in the form of primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from institutional reports, institutional survey results, and public officials' statements. Secondary data obtained from books, journals, and news in the media. Data analysis technique used in this research is qualitative analysis. Qualitative analysis in a study emphasizes the interpretation of data and statements obtained from secondary data collection and primary which is then associated with theories, concepts, and preposition that have been determined by researchers. This qualitative analysis consists of three activities simultaneously: data reduction, data presentation and conclusion or verification.

## 3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

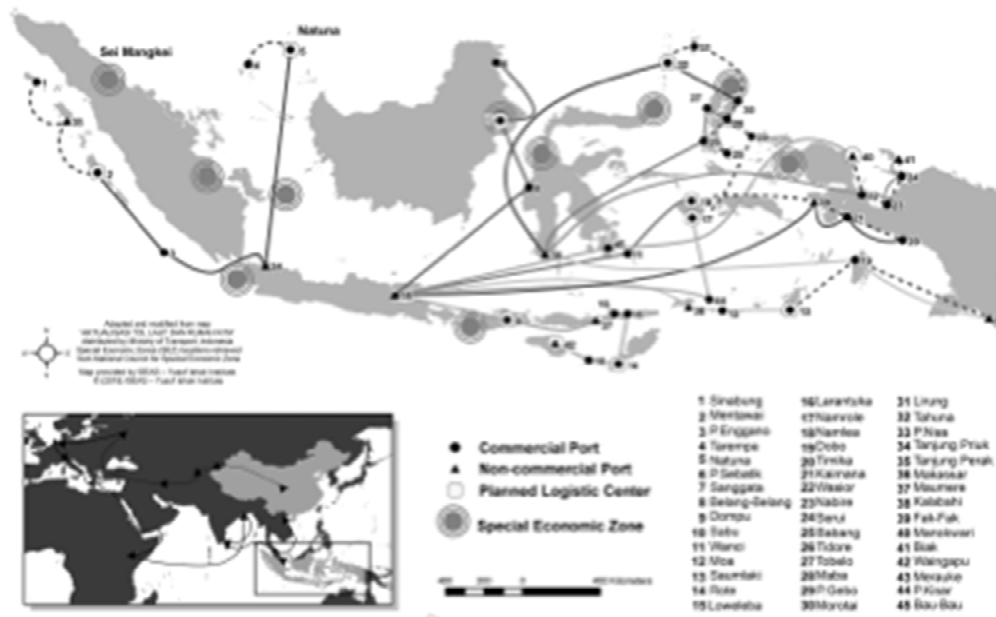
The number of Chinese FDI in Indonesia and the amount of Indonesia's debt to China is large. Table 1 shows the realization of Chinese FDI in Indonesia 2010-2017 in million dollars. In addition, Indonesia's loan to China through Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) also increased. From US\$ 800 million in 2007 increased to US\$ 15.7 billion in 2017 with loan composition for private sector of 92% and government 8%. The portion of debt to China has increased from 0.6% in 2008 to 4.5% in 2017. While debt to Japan which has been the traditional partner of Indonesia declined; from 23.8% in 2008 to 8.3% in 2017 (Negara & Suryadinata 2018). Based on data from Bank Indonesia April 2018, Indonesia's debt to China doubled to US\$ 16.7 billion. Data is taken without including Hong Kong. If Hong Kong is involved then the data will get bigger (Haswidi 2018).

Table 1: Chinese FDI Realisation in Indonesia 2010-2017 (US\$ million)



Source: BKPM.

Before Jokowi's administration, China was involved in projects such as the Surabaya-Madura Bridge, an electric generator project, the construction of the Jatigede dam. In the Jokowi period, China was involved in the construction of hydro-power, the Jakarta-Bandung highway project. At the meeting in BRI Summit in May 2017, Jokowi offers port development in Kuala Tanjung, Bitung and Bali (Kompas, May 16, 2017). Table 2 shows the project proposed by Indonesia to be financed by BRI. Indonesia also does not close the possibility of financing by other parties outside BRI. As shown in Figure 2, Indonesia's maritime development plan is also not related to BRI's development plan. Specific projects approved by both countries also do not exist yet (Negara & Suryadinata 2018). Indonesia also secured a US\$ 2.4 billion loan from AIIB. This loan is to finance programs to improve urban transport infrastructure, improve slum areas, cheaper housing, and dam construction and irrigation. The financing distribution is National Slum Upgrading Project (US\$ 217 million), Regional Infrastructure Development Fund (US \$ 100 million), and Dam Operation Improvement Project (US \$ 125 million) (Das 2018).



Source: Ministry of Transport <[https://kominfo.go.id/content/detail/9612/pemerintah-optimistis-kembalikan-kejayaan-maritim-indonesia/0/artikel\\_gpr](https://kominfo.go.id/content/detail/9612/pemerintah-optimistis-kembalikan-kejayaan-maritim-indonesia/0/artikel_gpr)>.

Figure 2: Indonesia's Maritime Development Plan and BRI Route

Table 2: Proposed Projects in Indonesia

No.	Type/sector	Location	Province
1	Tourism	Lake Toba	North Sumatera
2	Industrial zones	Sei Mangkei, Kuala Tanjung	North Sumatera
3	Port, toll road, airport, railway	TBC	North Sumatera
4	Plantation	TBC	North Kalimantan
5	Industrial zones, alumina	TBC	North Kalimantan
6	Onshore mini LNG	TBC	North Kalimantan
7	Tourism	Manado-Bitung	North Sulawesi
8	Industrial zones, agroindustry, logistics, fisheries	Bitung	North Sulawesi
9	Port, toll road, airport, railway	TBC	North Sulawesi
10	Tourism	Ubud, Kuta, Nusa Dua, Nusa Penida, Tanjung Bena	Bali
11	Port, toll road, airport, railway	TBC	Bali

Note: The list is prepared by Bappenas in consultation with relevant ministries.

Source: Bappenas 2017 via BKPM.

Jokowi program in 2014 so that Indonesia no longer export raw mineral materials get good response for development of mineral purification industry at domestic level. Some Chinese companies are investing in upstream industry development (The

Economist, 18 January 2014). The construction of a stainless steel factory in Morowali, Central Sulawesi has received much attention. There are two factories built there. Started in 2015 and is expected to be completed in 2018. Both plants are built by a joint

venture company PT Dexin Steel Indonesia, which is 45% owned by Delong Steel Singapore Projects Pte Ltd (a subsidiary of China's Delong Holdings Ltd), 43% owned by Shanghai Decent and 12 % owned by PT Indonesia Morowali Industrial Park (The Jakarta Post, 18 June 2017). Several joint venture agreements also took place, namely (1) alumina smelter in Ketapang, West Kalimantan established by China's Hongqiao Group Ltd and Harita Group with value of US \$ 1 billion; (2) Nickel smelter in South Sulawesi built by China's Hanking Group Ltd and Bumi Makmur Selasar Group for US \$ 500 million; (3) the industry in Cikarang, West Java was founded by China's Shenzhen Yantian Port Group Co., Country Garden Holdings Co. and Lippo Group with a value of US \$ 14.5 billion (Negara & Suryadinata 2018). A widely circulated issue is the presence of workers from China in the region and local partners are still part of overseas china (Chinese Indonesians). The Chinese government considers that overseas China as all ethnic Chinese spread all over the world (Negara & Suryadinata 2018). Moreover, in the investment made by China not only on financing. These include project management, equipment supplies, construction materials and workers (Das 2018). Concern also arises that China is building up projects that the recipient country does not really need and only burdening the foreign debt of the recipient country to China (Faulder & Kawase 2018).

Policy-making processes in developing countries are volatile, influenced by domestic political uncertainty, changing political context processes, changing the role of civil society, the influence of donor countries and weak institutional capacity (Buse et al 2005; Sutcliffe & Court, 2005). These lead to unpredictable and sectorally predictable political and policy assumptions rather than a grand aggregate agenda (Holmes & Scoones, 2000; Waldman, 2005).

Donor countries and foreign investors influence foreign policy making. Hattori (2001, 2003) sees foreign aid as a foreign policy tool. Foreign aid is defined as symbolic power politics between donors and recipients. Foreign aid can be seen as a form of giving, as a type of resource allocation, or as symbolic domination. Foreign aid has an indirect effect as a form of donor country domination to the recipient country (Belle 2017). Partner countries expect the existence of diplomatic solidarity and economic benefits in return for foreign aid and investments (Mawdsley 2012).

The recipient country follows the interests of the donor country in exchange for the foreign assistance. Viewed from the eyes of the recipient country, economic factors are the main driving force of the

state receiving foreign aid. Because of these economic factors, the recipient country is more focused on the package or program of foreign assistance offered than the political interest intentions of the donor country (Lin 2000). However, economic dominance without social dominance does not necessarily make the foreign policy of the recipient countries follow or support the policies of donor countries (Burawoy 2012, Lovett 2009). For that matter perception and acceptance need to be taken into account. Here soft power plays its function. Soft power gives rise to symbolic dominance. China applies this symbolic dominance through four ways (Saidi & Wolf 2011; Mawdsley 2012; Chan 2013). First by developing a discourse that the world today is unfair and inequitable. Globalization offers more challenges and risks than opportunities to developing countries. Therefore, it needs south-south cooperation so that the agenda of international institutions is more aligned to developing countries. Second, China emphasizes the value of non interference to domestic interests. Third, China encourages more cooperation of southern countries through investment cooperation, joint ventures, banking, technology transfer and so on. Fourth, China claims to be the driving force behind the emergence of peaceful multilateralism and peaceful negotiations on international issues. It can be said in realizing the symbolic dominance of China utilizing the discourse of the southern states as a sovereign state of anti-colonization, anti-postcolonial hegemony, and disliking the hierarchical dichotomy between north-south. And only through south-south cooperation that development collaboration will benefit both parties. Traditional donors prioritize charity, social development, and benevolence (Saidi & Wolf 2011). While donors from these southern states offer solidarity, mutual benefit, shared identities (Mawdsley 2012).

However, China's soft power capability is still low when compared to its hard power capabilities. China's economic power is ranked second after the United States. China's military spending though still far from US military spending, but Chinese military spending is equivalent to a combination of military spending of Japan, Taiwan and South Korea (Gilley 2011). Meanwhile, China's soft power is still low. Kim (2010) calculated that China's soft power is ranked 24th in 2000. Based on a survey compiled by Pew Global Attitudes found that about 51% of surveyed respondents believe that China will replace the United States as a leading superpower. Based on a public opinion poll conducted by Lowy Institute Poll in 2006, reveals that Indonesians trust Japan

(76%) more compare to China (59%). It also reveals that 64% respondents feel more positive to Japan as a neighbor compare to China (58%). The survey conducted by Center for China Studies conducted in 2014 also shows that among countries that provide large investment in Indonesia, China is less favorable (71%) than Japan (86%), United States (74%) and India (72%).

This symbolic dominance makes China economically but not politically trusted. Domination requires the same values and interests (Gilley 2011). In Indonesia, negative perceptions of China (especially Chinese Indonesians) among the public domestic and elite are still high. Based on a survey conducted by ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute and the Indonesian Survey Institute of 508 members of the provincial legislature (DPRD) found that 46% believe that Chinese Indonesians have much influence in Indonesian politics. Fifty-five percent of the elite surveyed objected if Chinese Indonesians held political office. Major percentages are shown in the Islamic parties: PAN is 82%, PPP is 81%, PKS is 73%, and PKB is 65% (Fossati & Warburton 2018). Similar to public perception, the elite also argues that Chinese Indonesians have a great influence in the economy. The percentages above 60% are all. In sequence PAN is 95%, PKS 86%, Demokrat 85%, Gerindra and PKB equal to 83%, Golkar 73%, Hanura 72%, NasDem 71%, PPP 67% and PDI-P 65% (Fossati & Warburton 2018).

Public perception is also unfavorable to China. Based on the ISEAS-Yusof Ishak survey of 2017, negative perspectives on China are largely shaped by fears of foreign invasions from China, economic control by China and Chinese Indonesians. China and Chinese Indonesians are considered to have a close relationship. As many as 48.4% of respondents stated that China Indonesia only cares and thinks about itself. When asked whether Chinese Indonesians still have loyalty with China, 47.6% of respondents stated that Chinese Indonesians are still loyal to China. In economic terms, 62% of respondents see that Chinese Indonesians have a big influence on the Indonesian economy. Chinese Indonesians are considered to have more privileges than any other citizens. The survey found that 68.1% of respondents stated that Chinese Indonesians have a talent for more success. Therefore 60.1% of respondents consider that Chinese Indonesians are at least middle class and 59.8% of respondents agree that Chinese Indonesians is richer than other Indonesians (Herlijanto 2017).

Economic control by ethnic Chinese is inseparable from the long history of the existence of Chinese Indonesians. Chinese Indonesians are having

close relationship with elites, especially military's elite. During Soeharto's era, the military's elite had a strong position in the government. Many of them were senior political figures. As senior political figures, they have access to much government projects. They are getting used to their contracts, licenses, credits and other government projects. As they had lack of business skills, they engaged with Chinese Indonesian to manage their business. It was because Chinese Indonesian could only be involved in economy sector and because they were good on business (Bowie & Unger 1997). Soon, personal relationships between individual business people and senior political figures are the dominant pattern of business interest representation. Chinese Indonesian offered military and indigenous politicians and officials, cash and shares, seats on their boards of directors, or profitable business opportunities. The Chinese Indonesians found that their commercial success correlated closely with how high up in the government their patrons ranked. Those are connected to the highest levels of income subsidies and rent opportunities that enable them rapidly to accumulate capital for business expansion. Soon, Chinese Indonesians dominated the Indonesian economy. Based on a Far Eastern Economic Review investigation in 1998, Chinese Indonesian businesses controlled 80% of Indonesian wealth whilst they were only 2% of total population (Far Eastern Economic Review 28 May 1998 cited in Purdey 2000). Chinese Indonesians were associated with corruption. They were targeted and victims of political and economic nationalism sentiments in May 1998 when mass protests in Jakarta demanded reformation and Soeharto resignation. The riot caused many Chinese Indonesians business closed down and they fled to China (Yue 2000). Nineteen years after reformation the stereotypes among Chinese Indonesians are remained. Based on a survey by ISEAS Yusof-Ishak in 2017, most respondents (62.4%) consider that Indonesia will only benefit slightly from China despite their close economic ties (Fossati, Hui, Negara 2017).

The issue of China played a lot of political opponents Jokowi despite the fact that China has invested heavily and worked on infrastructure projects in the previous presidential period. The use of issues surrounding foreign investment by political opponents is often found in countries with established democracies. The political competition made the issue shift, from what were originally industrial relations to political contestation (Robertson & Teitelbaum 2011). The issue is surrounding the flood of labor from China at the level of blue collar (non-

skilled workers). For example, at a cement factory in Lebak Banten, there are rumored to be about 800 non-skilled workers from China. In fact there are 400 workers from China employed because the industry require special skills from them. The Minister of Labor Hanif Dhakiri and Vice President Yusuf Kalla has denied the rumor (Kompas 17 July 2017). Jokowi's political opponents also wrapped up the issue by exploiting the MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) with China containing the government's target to bring in 10 million Chinese tourists until 2019. The target to bring in tourists was then repackaged as a statement to bring in 10 million workers from China (Kompas 3 October 2016).

The stereotypes of China and Chinese Indonesians among the domestic public and the elite have made Indonesia's policy towards China pragmatic to gain many benefits and avoid direct confrontation. At the same time Indonesia is also trying to expand policy possibilities. Indonesia's attitude is more to hedging. Hedging is defined as a strategy aimed at avoiding situations where the state is not biased to firmly define behavior such as balancing, bandwagoning, or neutrality. Hedging provides a space for a country to cooperate without taking parties from one of the competing parties so there is a high ambiguity in the direction of the hedging country's policy.

Some time Indonesia did military display as a sign that Indonesia is independent of China. Indonesia also opens opportunities for foreign-owned oil exploration companies to conduct exploration in the Natuna islands. The Natuna Islands are in the South China Sea and have an unexploited gas and petroleum content. Additionally, Indonesia announced a new naming for some of the South China Sea region as the Natuna North Sea in July 2017. It received a response from China. China requested that Indonesia cancel the decision. Indonesia's Coordinating Minister of Maritime Affairs Luhut Panjaitan said that it is included in Indonesia's domestic realm because it is still within the Indonesian ZEE region and not part of the South China Sea as a whole. Therefore, China should not intervene. Another incident was in March 2016. The Chinese ship was suspected of illegal fishing in the Natuna islands and Minister of Marine Resources and Fisheries Susi Pudjiastuti protested against the action to the Chinese ambassador to Indonesia. Attitudes to be more proactive are also shown by the military. General Moeldoko publicly wrote in the Wall Street Journal that Indonesia should be firm against China in the South China Sea.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs shows friendly attitude. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of 2014

stated that between Indonesia and China there is no regional dispute and Indonesia took a position to use ASEAN as a mediator of disputes in the South China Sea. President Jokowi states the same that each side should support the Code of Conduct of the South China Sea and say that the nine-dashed line claimed by China has no basis in international law (Kapoor & Sieg 2015). This South China Sea issue also does not get much response from the Indonesian public. This is because Indonesia is not one of the four Southeast Asian South China Sea claimants.

The attitude of hedging is also seen from the attitude of Indonesia who mostly uses its position as middle power country. Indonesia is careful not to take sides with China or the United States. China is an important partner in economy; meanwhile the United States is an important partner in terms of security. Additionally, Chinese presences in the South China Sea and nine-dashed line claims have no direct effect on Indonesia. This prevents Indonesia from rushing into alignment with one party and preferring to use ASEAN as a regional organization. Middle power executes a strategy to take part that affects international organizations because through international institutions middle power can reduce the gap with great powers (Gilley 2011, Hilliker 2010). Middle power avoids the attitude of supporting one party to reduce the risk of "betting on the wrong horse" (Kuik & Rozman 2015). Indonesia currently plays it. Gilley (2011) mentions that as a form of response to China's rising power in the region, Indonesia is the second ranked great power status or major power in Asia, as well as Japan. South Korea and Thailand are identified as middle power. Hamilton-Hart & McRae (2015) calls Indonesia a middle power. Based on the notion of Mares (1988), Middle power has the ability to disrupt the system but has no ability to change it through unilateral action. Middle power with sufficient resources, together with a small country in the region can affect the existing system.

## 4 CONCLUSION

The number of Chinese investment and loans in Indonesia increased rapidly during the reign of Jokowi. This raises concerns that Indonesia is becoming dependent on China. Instead of bandwagoning, Indonesia chose to be hedging in its foreign policy towards China. This is evident from Indonesia's stance on the security situation in the South China Sea and Indonesia's stance on the Belt Road Initiative. On the issue of the South China Sea,

Indonesia uses ASEAN as a forum to negotiate with China. Indonesia exploited ASEAN to voice its policies so that China can comply with the code of conduct compiled together. With respect to the Belt Road Initiative, no projects have been financed under BRI's mechanism yet. In addition, the proposed Indonesian projects that are offered are not all within BRI's line of business. Indonesia also invited investors from other countries to BRI and non-BRI lines.

In the meantime, there are two things influence the attitude of Indonesian hedging. Firstly, there are still high public and elite stereotypes in Indonesia against China. As a result Jokowi tends to be careful to offer projects that are done and funded by China. The funding project by BRI has also not been implemented. Secondly, for the issue of the area in the South China Sea, Indonesia is not directly involved as a claimant country so this issue does not get much attention from public domestic. Therefore, Jokowi plays a role as a middle power by utilizing ASEAN. For the Natuna region, especially the cases of fish theft by Chinese vessels in the EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone) region of Indonesia, the Ministry of Marine Affairs and fisheries often cast protests. Response is also given by increasing patrolling of the area in Natuna.

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