

Indonesia's Defense Diplomacy Strength Towards China's Aggressive Maritime Policy

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Abstract : This research is departed from the security issues generated from China's unilateral claims in the South China Sea conflict. The diplomacy challenges come from Indonesia's relations with China as well as with ASEAN-member countries involved in the conflict. It is estimated that the conflict in the South China Sea region will become an endless conflict. Comprehensively, Indonesia is implementing a gradual shift in diplomatic approach in creating positive and constructive ties among Indonesia, China, and ASEAN. In line with the rapid-changing world order, the conventional military approach becomes less significant in today's modern inter-state interactions. This research is conducted in a qualitative literature review to explain how Indonesia's recent soft diplomacy approach applied in the South China Sea conflict. This type of diplomacy theoretically assumed as one of the most preferred ways to establish mutual trust and confidence among conflicting parties. Maritime issues found its significance in contemporary foreign policy since the world's most dynamic region has moved to the archipelagic Asia-Pacific. As mentioned by rationalists, every country, including Indonesia, has surely formulated its own prominent national interest, such as the defense aspect. Finally, this research will provide a deep analysis on Indonesia's centrality in ASEAN as an effective way to ensure Indonesia's strategic policy in the region well accommodated.

Keywords : soft diplomacy, south China sea, national defense, China

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