



CHINA-INDONESIA COLLABORATION ON MARITIME DIPLOMACY: THE STRATEGIC CONVERGENCE OF CHINA'S MARITIME SILK ROAD AND INDONESIA'S GLOBAL MARITIME FULCRUM

By: Rayang Amiriyanti¹
and Anak Agung Banyu Perwita²



Abstract:

Seeing the glory of Maritime Silk Road in the past has driven President Republic of China, Xi Jinping to build back again the glory of Maritime Silk Road into this 21st century. Known as "One Belt One Road (OBOR) Initiative", China's 21st Century Maritime Silk Road has become one of the initiative that China has created in solving the economy problem and the challenges that the country has faced. The steps have been implemented by Xi Jinping in running the initiative mission by doing the diplomacy in countries that have been through the maritime silk route including Indonesia. Joko Widodo has known as the President Republic of Indonesia started his administration by declaring his vision to build Indonesia as Global Maritime Fulcrum. In his journey, Indonesia have faced many various challenges such as lack of the connectivity in region and the development of infrastructure that needed to be improved. Having the vision in maritime has driven China and Indonesia to collaborate in maritime diplomacy that was included in the "Joint Statement on Strengthening Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the People's Republic of China and Republic of Indonesia". The main focus of this article is to explain the collaboration and the interest of China in 21st century maritime silk road with Indonesia to be the Global Maritime Fulcrum in the period administration of President Xi Jinping and President Joko Widodo in year of 2014-2016.

Keywords - Maritime Silk Road, Global Maritime Fulcrum, One Belt One Road Initiative, China-Indonesia Collaboration, Maritime Diplomacy

INTRODUCTION

The Silk Road has been the foremost and historic trade routes of all century. It was connecting the East and China to the West and Europe.¹ In that era, The Silk Road hold the important role as transmission belt in spreading of technology, science, and ideology. It also took significant part in accelerating the growth of civilization which through passed by China, Persia, Europe, and Sub-Continent India. Not only accelerated economic growth, the Silk Road was also inclined as the platform for the interaction and mutual understanding for the countries that passed through silk road.²

In the broad outline, the Silk Road consists of two big cluster which are "Land-based Silk Road and Maritime Silk Road". The China Maritime Silk Road was built in the first era at Giao Chi. This route has been connecting China and cities port under control of Roman Empire in Egypt and also in the area around the Red Sea that passed through cities port in India and took part as the transit.³ Realizing the great achievement in the past and the potential role of Silk Road, President of People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping has proposed a mission to bring back the glory of Silk Road in this twenty first century to include not only towards Indonesia

1 Research Assistant at School of International Relations, President University, Kota Jababeka, Cikarang-Bekasi, Indonesia. She obtained her bachelor of degree in Interantional Relations from the same university.

2 Professor of International Relations, President University, Kota Jababeka, Cikarang-Bekasi, Indonesia.

and India as the major countries but also towards Sri Lanka and Maldives as the least developed countries.⁴

On the other side, Indonesia as one of the influential leader in ASEAN has been continuing to develop their country under the President Joko Widodo. The East Asia Summit in 2014 has been the right opportunity for President Joko Widodo to announce the much-awaited vision in making Indonesia as the Global Maritime Fulcrum (hereafter, GMF). Indonesia ascertained the important transformation that was contributed in the 21st century. Joko Widodo acknowledged that the focus of the geo-economic and geo-political world has been the expedient from West to East and at the same time also, Asian countries has been recognized to be grown. Joko Widodo wanted to maintain the peaceful of the Indian Ocean hence it would be safe for the interest of global trade and also to maintain it as the place that not to be used for the source of conflict or problem.⁵

However, in achieving their interests, both countries have to face several challenges. In China's perspective, the key to its national security interests is economic growth as it legitimizes the Communist Party of China's rule. The Maritime Silk Road has been included in the initiatives of "One Belt One Road". Hence, this initiative has been part of the survival plans for People Republic of China in solving their economy issues which are malinvestment, overheating, inflation and also the solution over to enhance the influence of power of China to the world and especially to spread their influence towards their neighbour countries.⁶

Besides that, Indonesia is also developing Global Maritime Fulcrum. It is a great vision as Indonesia recognized their economy potential by focusing on their maritime sector. As Collin Koh Swee Lean has argued that Indonesia needs to ensure the sustainability of its seaborne economy. He also argued that the sea power is not only about the navy but it also includes seaborne trade, maritime resources and naval

instruments or military capabilities at sea. However, GMF also seems to provide a vision and strategy that would benefit a middle power but it also requires the Indonesian Navy (TNI-AL) to transform itself to be a Green-Water Navy that is not just effective within the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) but also having limited extra regional capability.⁷

Coming at the right time, China and Indonesia realized each capability in supporting both countries interest to develop their own country or even to save and prevent the economy from potentials of overinvestment and inflation. Acknowledging the "China's 21st century Maritime Silk Road" diplomacy is an integral part of the the solution for the problem and also on how to making the role of this Xi Jinping rescue mission in saving China economy by supporting Indonesia towards their vision to be the Global Maritime Fulcrum. The question would arise on how China solves their economy problem as well and Indonesia's respond on tremendous challenges to be the Global Maritime Fulcrum.

Hence, this paper is an explanation of China's 21st Century Maritime Silk Road and the collaboration with Indonesia in pursuing Global Maritime Fulcrum on Maritime Diplomacy. Thus, this paper aims to answer the question on how China and Indonesia can collaborate to transform their common interests on Maritime Diplomacy. The main focus of this paper is to focus on the collaboration and the interest of China in 21st century maritime silk road and Indonesia's Global Maritime Fulcrum under the administration of President Xi Jinping and President Joko Widodo in the year of 2014-2016. The result of paper is expected to give a clearer picture to the readers about China-Indonesia collaboration on maritime diplomacy.

The Beginning of China's 21st Century Maritime Silk Road

Basically, the Silk Road is defined as "a

trade routes that linked Asia, Europe and Africa both through land and sea".⁸ In 2013, President Xi Jinping has promoted for the re-emergence of the new silk road under the spirits of regional and multilateral cooperation and harmony.⁹

This new silk road begins from mainland China to the South China Sea and then continue to Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean, Africa, and Europe. The Southern extension of the route offers access to the South Pacific.¹⁰ According to the National Development and Reform Commission of China (2015), the New Silk Road is based on five principles of the United Nations charter: "*mutual respect, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence*".¹¹

Since the beginning, "One Belt One Road (OBOR)" is part of its survival plans. Started in the history of the ruling era of Deng Xiaoping in Communist Party of China, the country started to change their policy in economy sector of that was dogmatic isolationist transformed to be what it is called as the spirit of socialist development. It is a model economy which mixed socialist values with capitalism values. In 1978, China introduced the open-door policies with purpose on developing the socialism with Chinese characteristics. The result of national reforms has altered the economy of China from economy where markets forced entertain virtually has no role in organizing economic activity to one in which these forces played a significant positive role. But as to be wished, Deng Xiaoping could not anticipate and brought solutions to all development problems that would sooner or later come to China, such as growing income inequality, problems in environment and even the global economic crisis that is currently pestilence People's Republic of China.¹²

While on the other side, Since 2010, the US has been working quite closely with its close allies in the region, such as South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines, Australia, India in its "pivot to Asia" policy initiative. Through this

way, it gave PRC the difficulties to enlarge its influence over regions to its east and bring on China to think over its strategy again regarding of concentrating investment in the eastern coast. Over with One Belt One Road, PRC is expanding to the West as well. The answer of China interest in politics and diplomatic through this Maritime silk road was not on how China can be accommodated but through which opportunities it would apply the influence as a new major power. Thus, the mission of Beijing's politics/diplomatic interests was on how they could show their power and global leaders not only in regional but also in international.¹³

On November 19th 2015, in the 23rd Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) held in Manila of the Philippines, the President Xi Jinping has expressed his ideas on enhancing partnerships for bring the prosperity in Asia-Pacific. APEC has become the platform for President Xi Jinping in promoting the win-win cooperation to take Asia in continuing to be the leader in global economic growth. In this chance, president Xi Jinping also noted his initiative of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road and emphasized to be determined, confident, and able to see the sustainable of economy and create more opportunities and prestige to Asia Pacific.¹⁴ In this context, China has shown the regional and global community on what we called as a persuasive maritime diplomacy.¹⁵

Maritime silk road is also become one of efforts in achieving the shared interest especially in connectivity between China and Southeast Asia. Sea and land has contributed in important role towards trade and security. In strengthening the connectivity, it has the significant purposes in the way to combat smuggling and trafficking (of narcotics, arms, human, and contraband) and other issues in the management of maritime sector (overfishing, maritime piracy, adverse effect of climate change to food and maritime security). China's interest in security has also been poured as well regarding its contribution in enduring regional peace and order. Thus,

Maritime Silk Road can be perceived as the channel for China to promote and expand its national interest in maintain peace over the dispute and security issues.¹⁶

Considering all problem in economy, politics, and security that China faced was directing the country in constructing the new strategy to prevent and also in solving the current problem that the country has deal with. And one of the shortcut in solving this dilemma is by doing the investment to overseas. Invest in overseas has some advantages in saving the China economy. First, China needed to grab a chance in moving the business cycle in fast through the investment especially in based on infrastructure. Second, it was the scheme that has been done in overseas where it wasn't involving too much liquidity in the sector of domestic market, and by the decreasing of liquidity that move in domestic market, hope it would prevent China from the danger of inflation because of the overheating as one of the factor in trade surplus. The trade surplus of China in 2013 has reached USD 45,4 billion or has increased to 46,5%.¹⁷ Therefore, China wanted to maintaining its economy and also at the same time to solve their economic problem as well. Thus, a vibrant economic interest has become China's main objective in bringing back the glory of silk road.

Gisela Grieger from European Parliamentary Research Service argued that One Belt One Road is the initiative that may drives China to bring more economic prosperity for the country.

"This strategic choice was also driven by domestic political and economic imperatives as embodied by the 'two centenary goals', China's overarching mid and long-term development objectives as defined by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The first centenary in 2021 relates to the founding of the CCP in 1921, and the second centenary in 2049 refers to the creation of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The first goal consists of turning China into 'a moderately prosperous society' by 2021, which requires a

doubling of the 2010 GDP and GDP per capita by the year. The second goal is about turning the country into 'a prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious and modern socialist country' by 2049. In this connection, President Xi Jinping launched the concept of the China dream, or the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation."¹⁸

The current priority of OBOR initiative was infrastructure connectivity. The government of China has accelerated its participation in the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and set up a US\$ 40 Billion Silk Road Fund. Based on the action plan, the Belt would have three routes and the road has two important routes.¹⁹

"The Silk Road Economic Belt":

1. China - Central Asia - Russia - Europe (The Baltic)
2. China - Central Asia - West Asia - Persian Gulf - Mediterranean Sea
3. China - Southeast Asia - South Asia - Indian Ocean

"The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road":

1. Coastal China - South China Sea - Indian Ocean - Europe
2. Coastal China - South China Sea - South Pacific²⁰

The above five maritime routes specified in the action plan, the Fung Business Intelligence Centre has identified 58 countries that are most likely able to contribute for the initiative where Indonesia as the biggest archipelagic country could also play a very significant role in the initiative. And many other countries who would joined this initiative are home to emerging middle class and can bring the key to the regional and global economic growth in the future. Thus, The vision of One Belt One Road initiative has also been put in the realization of the links that relate in the policies, infrastructure, trade, finance and people. The links that have been summarized as precede which are "policy coordination, capacity building, liberalization



Geographic Coverage of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road (Sources: the Fung Business Intelligence Centre based on the FRAMEWORK chapter of the "Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road")

and facilitation of trade and investment and financial cooperation".²¹

Indonesia as the Global Maritime Fulcrum

Indonesia has so much potential to be a very strong maritime state. Joko Widodo declared his vision to make Indonesia as the Global Maritime Fulcrum, in East Asia Summit on November 13th 2014 in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. He further stated,

*"Indonesia is exactly in the middle of that process strategic change, as well as in geographical, geopolitical, and also geoeconomically. Therefore, as maritime country, Indonesia have to emphasize itself as the Global Maritime Fulcrum and as a power in between two oceans: Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean. And position as the Global Maritime Fulcrum open the opportunity for Indonesia to build cooperation in regional and international for prosperity of society."*²²

Emphasizing the Indonesia as having a great potential to be maritime power had been shown from two important events that happened in the past. The two important events have increased the wide recognition of Indonesian territorial seas which are: first, Djuanda Declaration in 1957 which includes any seas in

and between the outer islands as the territorial region (The Indonesian Archipelago Waters). In the beginning, the territorial sea was only 3 miles from the coast line. But with the concept of the archipelagic state, the deep seas are also included as the part of the territorial sea, even though the distance more than 3 miles. While the second was in 1985 when Indonesia ratified

UNCLOS 1982 which has added the water territorial region from 3 miles to be 12 miles, and also EEZ which has the distance 200 miles from the coast lines. Both of these territorial expansions was gained by Indonesia without using any single bullet, but with the intent and diligent maritime diplomacy.²³

As the biggest archipelagic country in the world, Indonesia has a very tremendous potential to be Global Maritime Fulcrum. It is a very strategic idea that was implemented to guarantee the connectivity in each island, developing the naval and fishery industry, improving the maritime transportation and also focus on maritime security. Maintaining the sovereignty of Indonesia maritime region, revitalizing economy naval sector, strengthening and improving maritime connectivity, rehabilitation damaging of environment and conservation of biodiversity, and also improving the quality and quantity of naval human resources. Thus, all the major programs in Joko Widodo administration is to bring Indonesia as Global Maritime Fulcrum. In order to be the global maritime fulcrum, the port system in Indonesia should be modernized based on International standard. Therefore, the service



Major sea lines of communication through Indonesia (Source: uscnpm.com)

and access in all ports should meet the International standard as well.²⁴

Despite of that, the challenges are huge and needed to be tackled by Indonesia in reaching the vision as a Global Maritime Fulcrum. Indonesia is now increasingly interconnected with Pacific and Indian Oceans (PACINDO) as the main theatre of Indonesian foreign policy engagement.²⁵ While the other priority is to further develop the defense capability.

"We will direct the development of strength defense not only for fulfilling the Minimum Essential Force (MEF) but also purpose for building Indonesia's National Army (TNI) as respected regional maritime power in East Asia. Therefore, the government must have a long-term strategic plan which will be supported by multiyear defense budget plan that can ensure the achievement of development targets defense force."²⁶

China-Indonesia Collaboration on Maritime Diplomacy

In realizing its initiative, China needed to build the cooperation. The tools that China implemented was the strategy of "One Belt One Road". Analyzing the way of China in creating

the cooperation and diplomacy with each country can be seen through the lenses of bilateralism in international relations. The bilateralism acts as the solution to several flaws incurred under multilateralism.

Understanding the interest and the tools that has been used. China also emphasized its interest in maritime by the initiative of bringing back the glory of Maritime Silk Road into this 21st century. China would like

to share the same values that the country believed. Hence, China was trying to make the success of the Maritime Silk Road again by improving sea route of Maritime Silk Road. China also believed by making the cooperation and diplomacy with the country who have the same values with them would bring good benefit for each other's.

Over the common interest of both countries, Hence, China and Indonesia do collaboration on maritime diplomacy. It has been emphasized in the "Joint Statement on Strengthening Comprehensive Strategic Partnership" between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Indonesia. President Xi Jinping invited President Joko Widodo to attend the "Boao Forum for Asia (BFA)" as the annual conference that held from 26 to 28 march 2015 in Beijing. The two presidents were quite satisfied with the developments of the bilateral relations that have been made. Both countries have agreed "to bolster their political mutual trust, implement practical and more concrete cooperation, and strengthened people-to-people and cultural exchanges". In the "Joint Statement on Strengthening Comprehensive Strategic Partnership" (*hereinafter*, JSSCSP) between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of

Indonesia also concluded its common interest to emphasize its collaboration.

*"The continuous deepening of China-Indonesia relations serves the common interests of the peoples of the two countries, and greatly contributes to regional peace and stability and world development and prosperity. The two sides should make joint efforts to highlight the distinctive features of the comprehensive strategic partnership, namely sovereign equality, mutual respect, mutual trust, mutual benefit, reciprocity, unity and coordination, in the new era."*²⁷

The JSSCSP between China and Indonesia also concluded collaboration between China-Indonesia on maritime diplomacy.

"The two sides held the view that the initiative of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road proposed by President Xi Jinping and the strategy of the Global Maritime Fulcrum initiated by President Joko Widodo are highly complementary to each other. The two sides agreed to synergize them to each other's advantages, strengthen strategy and policy communications, advance maritime infrastructure connectivity, deepen cooperation in industrial investment and major project construction, enhance practical cooperation in maritime economy, maritime culture, maritime tourism, so as to develop a Maritime Partnership together"

Thus, analyzing the common interest of both countries has brought the impacts for both countries in creating the collaboration. Exploring the interest of the countries in Asia, China has found Indonesia as one of the perfect match to be the partner to implement the initiatives of One Belt One Road especially on China's 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. It has been stated on May 9th, 2016 by State Councilor Yang Jiechi that:

"to be more specific, both sides will expand market access and elevate the level of trade facilitation so as to promote the sustained and healthy development of bilateral trade; create a favorable investment environment and push

*the investment cooperation up to a new height; carry out production capacity cooperation and improve the industrialization level of Indonesia; launch cooperation in electricity and other sectors with various forms such as investment and the integration of construction and operation, and provide economic development with effective guarantee; conduct cooperation in marine resources census and development planning, aquaculture and fishery processing as well as other areas; continue launching diverse forms of infrastructure construction cooperation and offer multi-channel financing support to it; expand the scale of settlement in local currency and stabilize regional financial order and other aspects. In a word, the two sides will realize the goals of economic development and livelihood improvement through elevating cooperation level and expanding cooperation scope, so as to achieve mutual benefit, win-win results and common development and endow the ancient Silk Road with new connotations of the time."*²⁸

China and Indonesia see the potential of maritime to be the way and the solutions as well to give more development to both of countries' economy. The collaboration was basically the implementation of maritime diplomacy of both countries which can be seen from the table below.

Conclusion

Concerning the common interest of the two countries, the collaboration has been pointed out in the Joint Statement on Strengthening Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between China and Indonesia. The initiative of China's 21st century Maritime Silk Road and Indonesia as Global Maritime Fulcrum are complementary to each other. Hence, China and Indonesia believed in synergizing the common interest into the collaboration to further develop both countries.

The collaboration has become the answer of China and Indonesia's challenge in bringing

	China	Indonesia
Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustaining the economic growth • Spreading the influence of the country's power • Maintaining the regional and global peace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build the maritime culture • Mantain and manage natural resources in ocean • Development of infrastructure and maritime connectivity
Obstacles /Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facing the economic problem : Malinvestment, Overheating, Inflation, etc • Lack of the spreading the influence of the power • The incoming actor who take the role of entering Asia market; US pivot to Asia initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Infrastructure • Lack of improvement in defense and security • Need to develop more potential in the maritime sector
Opportunity	Initiating China's 21 st century Maritime Silk Road	Implementing Indonesia as the Global Maritime Fulcrum
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Coordination • Capacity Building • Liberalization & Facilitation of Trade & Investment • Financial Cooperation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebuilding Indonesia's maritime culture • Priority the development of maritime infrastructure and connectivity • Mantain & manage marine resources • Maritime diplomacy, corporate and eliminate conflicts at sea • Develop the maritime defense forces
China – Indonesia Collaboration	Joint Statement on Strengthening Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between People's Republic of China and Republic of Indonesia	
The implementation of the collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China has been invited to corporate through investment in Indonesia's infrastructure; 15 new airports, 24 seaports, etc • Enhancing the communication of the relations towards each other • Implementing the bilateral defense cooperation and committed to strengthening high-level military exchanges, making good use of defense & security consultation, joint commission of defense technology & industry as well as navy dialogue • China support for Indonesia to keep up the national unity and 	

The matrix of the interest and the implementation of the China-Indonesia Collaboration to transform the common interest on maritime diplomacy

the development of the countries. Both countries believed in utilizing the potential of maritime as the asset to enhance the development of the countries. Both countries also believed by developing the infrastructure of the country is the first step in engaging the collaboration together. Running their economy, China needed the new market and the initiative of One Belt One Road where included China's 21st century Maritime Silk Road as interest of China in offering collaboration with Indonesia who have

the same interest in maritime such as having the vision to be the Global Maritime Fulcrum.

Seeing Indonesia as the partner in the collaboration to develop the initiative, China understood well to what Indonesia needs. Enhancing the infrastructure of the country, Indonesia believed this has been the important component in the process of country's economy to be developed and also the important step to enhance the potential of the country to be the

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