

The Intersection between China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Indonesia's Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) after Covid-19

Persinggungan antara Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) China dan Poros Maritim Global (GMF) Indonesia pasca Covid-19

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Received: May 31, 2022; Revised: July 12, 2022; Approved: August 5, 2022

ABSTRAK

Menyikapi kondisi politik dan ekonomi Asia Tenggara saat ini, artikel ini akan menguraikan persinggungan antara politik luar negeri China dan Indonesia di dua sisi, dalam konteks negatif dan positif dengan memahami visi politik luar negeri dari masing-masing negara. Penjelasan persinggungan Belt Road Initiative (BRI) oleh China dengan Poros Maritim Dunia atau Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) Indonesia dilakukan dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif dan mengumpulkan data dari studi pustaka. Analisis media dan konsep kepentingan nasional digunakan untuk memahami penerapan kebijakan luar negeri dua negara. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Indonesia perlu menanggapi kebijakan luar negeri China dengan seksama. Terlebih, wabah COVID-19 telah mengubah kondisi akan tujuan kebijakan dari masing-masing negara yang berbenturan satu sama lain. Meskipun setiap keputusan yang diambil Indonesia mengenai kebijakan BRI China tidak akan merugikan kepentingan nasional Indonesia di masa depan, Indonesia tetap harus waspada dan mengimplikasikan keputusan yang bijaksana dalam kebijakan luar negerinya, khususnya selama masa pemulihan pandemi COVID-19.

Kata Kunci: Belt Road Initiative (BRI), Poros Maritim Global, Kepentingan Nasional, COVID 19

ABSTRACT

In response to the current condition of political and economic conditions in Southeast Asia, this article will elaborate on the intersection between China's and Indonesia's foreign policy on two sides, negative and positive intersection by understanding the foreign policy vision of each country's policy. This study

tries to explain the intersection of Belt Road Initiative (BRI) by China with Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) of Indonesia by using qualitative methods and collected data from library research. To deepen the understanding of how both states implemented their foreign policy, media analysis and national interest concept are used. The result indicates that Indonesia needs to respond to the foreign policy of China carefully. Moreover, the COVID-19 outbreak has altered the development of events on how the two missions from each country collide. Although every decision Indonesia has made regarding China's BRI policy will not harm Indonesia's national interest in the future, Indonesia will still have to tread carefully and imply wise decisions in its foreign policy, especially during the recovery period of COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Belt Road Initiative (BRI), Global Maritime Fulcrum, National Interest, COVID 19

INTRODUCTION

Under the administration of President Joko Widodo (Jokowi), Indonesia launched a new outlook on its foreign policy titled *Global Maritime Fulcrum* (GMF). The new outlook on its foreign policy is based on its rich history as an archipelagic state. To implement and achieve the goals of the GMF, acceleration in maritime development needs to be done for the welfare of the Indonesian people. While doing so, the GMF should be able to be synergized with various regional initiatives across the world such as Act East from India, the ASEAN Community, and the Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI) of the People's Republic of China. Thus, the implementation of GMF not only benefited the interest of Indonesia but also contributed to the other nations of the world. On the other hand, the BRI idea was implemented during Xi Jinping's administration. It begins with Xi Jinping's thoughts on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era which then included in the Constitution of the Chinese Communist Party at the 19th Congress in Beijing (Peters, 2017, p. 1301). His thought was later manifested in the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) which aims to build regional economic cooperation in the Asian region (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 2013). Furthermore, he announced the 21st-century Maritime Silk Route (MSR). These two initiatives then were widely known as One Belt, One Road (OBOR)

or BRI (PwC's Growth Markets Centre, 2016). OBOR is said to be the first phase of the development plan for 2020-2035, while the second phase is planned for 2035-2050 to create China as a modern, prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious, and beautiful socialist country (Peters, 2017, p. 1301).

The implementation of the policies above is not free from obstacles. When implementing GMF, Indonesia appears to have too many regulations which are not integrated with each other. For example, the appointment of the state agencies to hold the authority on the law enforcement and security at sea, which are the Water and Air Police, the Maritime and Coast-Guard Unit, and the Marine and Fishery Resources Supervision Officer are overlapping to each other, particularly in regard of shipping permit, fishing permit, and other licensing aspects (Pikoli, 2021, p. 158). On the BRI side, there is a problem called the “deficit-trap”. The policy to reduce trade and cooperation barriers between China and BRI countries has a consequence in unbalanced competition. The investment in infrastructure or other projects caused the local manufacturers to create new strategies to resist and overcome the competitiveness with Chinese products and also the decline in income and investment (Chang, 2022). Yet, Xi Jinping argued the BRI project is a win-win solution because it creates broader opportunities among countries (Reuters, 2019).

From both country's policies, we can observe that there are objectives and challenges, which are also already a lot of literature that discusses this matter, like Adam (2017) found that the public in Indonesia on the previous cooperation under One Belt One Road (OBOR), are having skepticism because the financing comes from China, which raises suspicion of Chinese investment in Indonesia (Adam, 2017). Damuri et al., (2019) mentioned that there is speculation that the BRI will be another form of neo-colonial power and a modern version of the China tributary system or some other conspiracy goal

(Damuri et al., 2021). Then, with regard to GMF, Laksmana (2019) considered that the National Ocean Policy is partly a large civil servant document that links pre-existing programs in the ministry (Laksmana, 2019).

It can be seen that there are still limited articles which discuss and examine the intersection between both BRI and GMF. Thus, this article tries to describe the outcome of the respective foreign policy of Indonesia and China and whether it is still in congruence with early establishment. By analyzing how the GMF and BRI benefit each other, we will gain a deeper understanding of how the states fulfill their national interests. This article also analyzed the implemented programs before and during the Covid-19 pandemic which affected the allocation of GDP of each country. The conclusion of this article summarized the data and facts presented in the discussion.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. Mely G. Tan explained that this research has the aim to describe accurately the nature of a symptom, situation, an individual, or a certain group, or to determine the spread of a symptom or the existence of a certain relationship to a symptom or condition with symptoms, or other conditions in society (Silalahi, 2009). Then, a literature study is applied to obtain the data for the analysis.

The data is obtained from official documents, books, journal articles, reports, and online sources such as the news from mass media. The writer implements data analysis techniques. According to Miles and Huberman, after collecting data, analysis activities include three main steps, those are data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion (Silalahi, 2009, pp. 339-340). This means that the data gained from the various sources will be filtered to result in the relevant data related to the topic of this research. Then the data is presented to be analyzed and concluded.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

For this research, we used the national interest concept since the establishment of nation-states to describe the aspirations and goals of the state in the international arena (Nuechterlein, 1976, p. 246). Hans J. Morgenthau stated the national interest is a standard for people or politicians to evaluate the decision-making process and implementation of a foreign policy (Morgenthau, *The Primacy of the National Interest*, 1949).

With the current situation of the globalized world and the post-Cold War era, the state is no longer the only actor in international relations and sovereignty is no longer the primary value of international politics. Other than that, the globalized world also influences the interactions between nations (Hudson, 2001, p. 343). They are no longer a single entity against the other, but they are a part of international society. The interactions between nations are not limited to politics, but also to economic, social, and other low-politics activities. In addition, a globalized world also means that even domestic occurrences experienced by nations will have a certain extent of influence on others. Therefore, it can be said that one actor in international relations has a certain degree of influence on the other, especially regarding national interest and foreign policy.

However, the increasing number of actors in international relations likewise leads to a clash of interests (Dermawan, 2019, p. 35). A clash of interests between actors is a natural sequence, especially if there are too many actors getting engaged and each of them has their interests. This situation in turn will induce the nations to struggle in pursuing their national interest. Thus, the nations need to adjust their national interest to correspond to global needs (Dermawan, 2019, p. 34; Frankel, 1970, p. 21). This modification can be done on the implementation of the established policy. This manner of modification can be identified as program changes. Program changes refer to the way the goals or aspirations of the nations are addressed and may require a new instrument. Thus, "what is done and how it is done is changed while the

purposes for which it is done remain the same/unchanged” (Hermann, 1990, p. 5). Although one should know that the change or modification in foreign policy by the policymakers involves a complex process, for instance, the influence of international situation and the role of individual values or perceptions as the policymakers, this article will only consider the influence of the international situation on the nation-state level.

Global Maritime Fulcrum Implementations Pre and Post COVID-19 Outbreak

As early as the Youth Pledge (sumpah pemuda) on October 28, 1928, the nationhood of Indonesia recognized itself as a land and water (Tanah-air) with the identity as both of land and sea nation (Coordinating Ministry for Maritime Affairs Republic of Indonesia, 2017, p. 17). Indonesia’s founding fathers also fully recognized that the extensive area of waters between the archipelago is not meant to separate the lands but to act in a unison. The Djuanda Declaration on December 13, 1957, pinpointed Indonesia's changing outlook on its marine systems which officially stated that the water surrounding, between, and unifying the lands/islands in Indonesia are part of Indonesia’s sovereignty. Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982 (UNCLOS), Indonesia’s sovereignty over the archipelagic waters is guaranteed under international law. The UNCLOS was subsequently ratified by Indonesia into its national law through Law Number 17 of 1985 on the Ratification of the UNCLOS. Furthermore, Indonesia's geographic position, the abundance of natural resources and the world’s social-economic condition has put Indonesia in a strategic position in which Indonesia has an important role to play in international relations.

Given the vast territory Indonesia has, it also brought forth pressure on the capabilities of the governing body to govern such dispersed maritime spaces. The fact that Indonesia, during the early phase of GMF, as an archipelagic state lacks connectivity due to poor and uneven infrastructure

development across the nation increases the concern about its maritime sovereignty. This situation led to the nation functioning more as a collection of weakly integrated economies than as a unified market (Neary, 2014). The poor infrastructure is also accompanied by limited funds regarding Indonesia's capabilities to safeguard its maritime areas. That is nothing new that maintaining and protecting sea lanes, even the ones without a substantial economic return on the investment, is highly costly. The emerging challenges posed due to this condition are illegal fishing, smuggling, widespread piracy, excruciatingly high cost of domestic goods transportation which cause the people to prefer the cheaper foreign goods, etc. It is against this background that the new outlook on Indonesia's foreign policy and nation-building during the first period of the Jokowi administration emerges.

At the 9th East Asia Summit in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, President Jokowi delivered five pillars to realize the aims of GMF. The five pillars are as follows: 1) rebuild the maritime culture; 2) maintain and manage the marine resources with a focus on building seafood sovereignty through the development of the fishing industry, by placing the fisherman as the main pillar; 3) infrastructure building and maritime connectivity through the building of tol laut, deep seaport, logistic, shipping industry, and maritime tourism; 4) develop maritime diplomacy by jointly eliminating sources of conflict at sea; 5) build a maritime defense force (President Joko Widodo, 2019). GMF is aimed as an effort of President Jokowi's administration to address the challenges mentioned above. In this case, GMF represents the national interest of Indonesia which for the first time emphasizes the maritime-centric view for the greater good of its, mainly, economic interest (Morris & Paoli, 2018, p. 17).

The efforts to strengthen Indonesia's maritime power did not start under the President Jokowi administration, it can be traced back to former Indonesian President B.J. Habibie. He came forward with the framework of Benua Maritim Indonesia (BMI) intending to make Indonesia a large,

respected, and independent maritime state. Unfortunately, due to the domestic crisis in Indonesia, this idea was not pursued and ended up being abandoned. During the presidency of Megawati Soekarnoputri, the 'Call for Sunda Kelapa' and 'the Bunaken Declaration' were set as the policy to call for the Indonesian people to jointly build Indonesia's maritime power. Meanwhile during the former administration Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY), had stated the importance of the maritime concept in the Manado Ocean Declaration in 2009 and 2012 at Shangri La Dialogue. SBY considers that the maritime development sector has strategic value since it has the potential to become an arena of conflict of interests between surrounding countries. He asked the national leaders to collaborate in dealing with global maritime problems and climate change issues. In addition, the connectivity between islands in Indonesia is not distributed equally. It can be evidenced that 57 and 17% of main and collector ports are located in the west part of Indonesia, mainly on Java Island (Yudhistira & Sofiyandi, 2017, p. 533).

At the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Focus Group discussion in April 2013, President Jokowi emphasized the importance of maritime connectivity through maritime infrastructure development (Saha, 2016, p. 4; Setiyono, 2020, p. 23). One of the most prominent maritime infrastructure development projects under the GMF is the establishment of a sea toll road (*tol laut*). The Indonesian government is aware that its port's efficiency is falling behind compared with its fellow Southeast Asian neighbors, for instance, Singapore and Malaysia. The Singapore and Malaysia international shipping process has an average dwell time of 1.5 days and 3 days respectively (Piesse, 2015, p. 5). President Jokowi planned to upgrade and/or build 24 ports to support the development of the sea toll road for greater domestic connectivity, efficiency, and access to international shipping to Indonesia (Salim, 2015, pp. 2-3). Total cost for upgrading and/or building 24 ports is IDR 100 trillion (US\$ 69 Million) and financed by state investment

(*penanaman modal negara/PMN*) to Pelindo I-IV (Kementerian PPN/Bappenas, 2015, p. 22; Kementerian PPN/Bappenas, 2015, pp. 5-101).

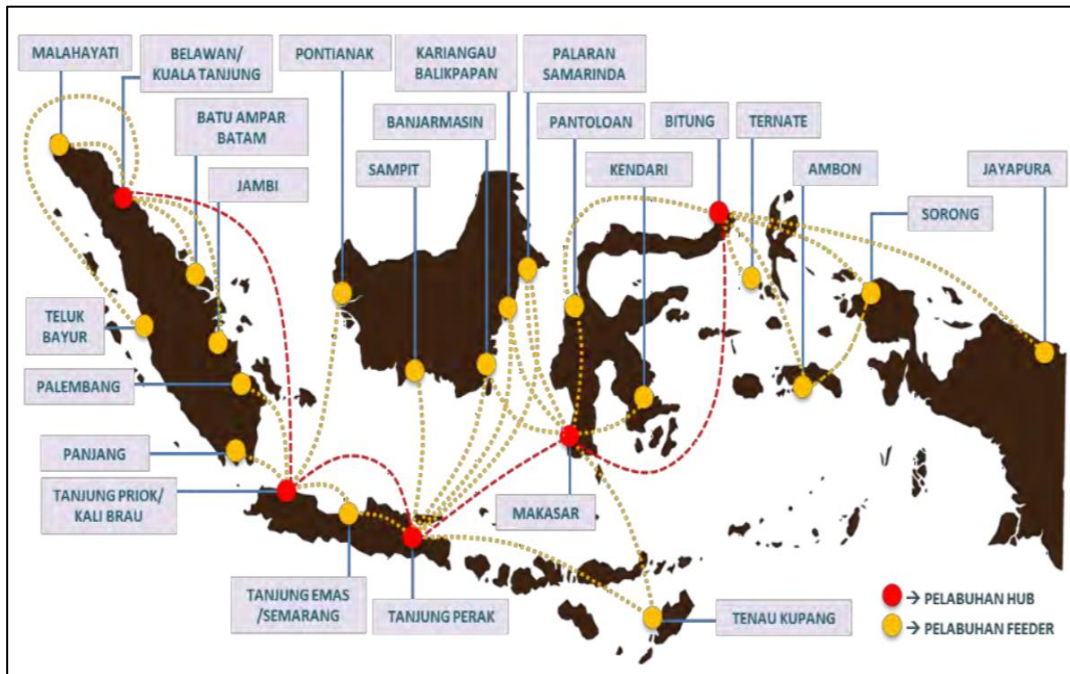


Figure 1. Sea Toll Road (*Tol Laut*) Map

Source: Bambang Prihartono (Kementerian PPN/Bappenas) - Pengembangan Tol Laut dalam RPJMN 2015-2019 dan Implementasi 2015, pp. 40

The Indonesian government named 24 locations in Indonesia (Figure 1) as the 24 ports to support the grand project of the sea toll road (Kementerian PPN/Bappenas, 2015, pp. 6-4, 6-11, 6-17, 6-24, 6-37, 6-49, 6-64, 6-74). Belawan, Batam, Tanjung Priok, Tanjung Perak, Makassar, and Sorong named it as the main center for maritime trade (ITE Transport & Logistics, 2017). The development of marine infrastructure is expected to improve the trade within the archipelago and re-assert Indonesia's maritime sovereignty. Furthermore, to encourage the utilization of *sea business*; domestic business utilizing the sea, the Indonesian government proposed to give an incentive for the ship operators, such as fuel subsidies, and import up to 2500 boats to increase the flow of goods and reduce the transportation fees (Piesse, 2015, p. 5).

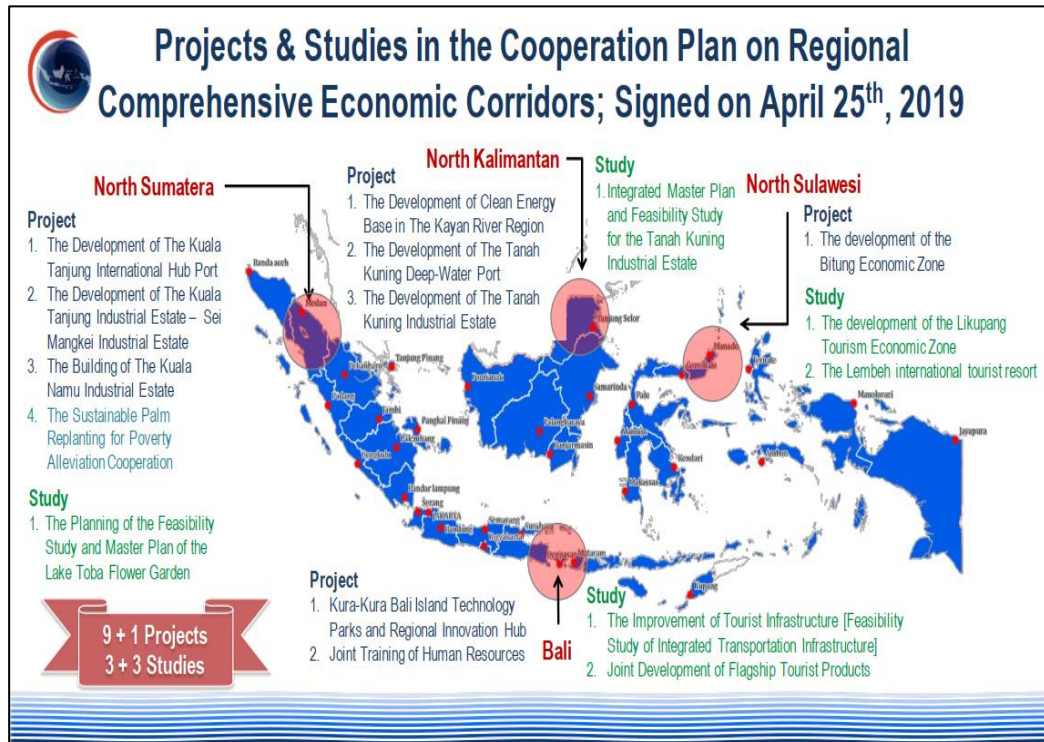


Figure 2. Project Collaboration between Indonesia's GMF and China's BRI

Source: Kementerian Koordinator Bidang Kemaritiman dan Investasi, 2019
 (<https://maritim.go.id/synergy-great-nations-chinas-belt-road-initiative-indonesias/>)

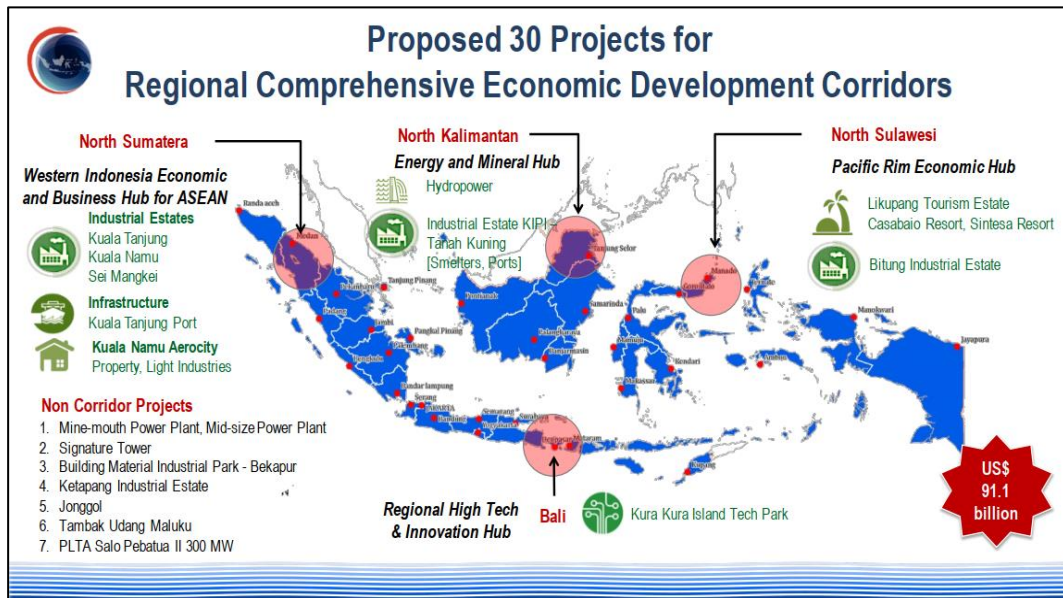


Figure 3. Proposed 30 Project between Indonesia's GMF and China's BRI

Source: Kementerian Koordinator Bidang Kemaritiman dan Investasi, 2019
 (<https://maritim.go.id/synergy-great-nations-chinas-belt-road-initiative-indonesias/>)

To carry out the grand project of the sea toll road specifically and GMF in general, the Indonesian government also collaborated with China through the signing of Jointly Promoting Cooperation within Framework on GMF and the Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Initiative as shown in Figure 4:



Figure 4. The New Silk Road Map (Old Version)

Source: (PwC's Growth Markets Centre, 2016)

Then on March 21, 2019, in Bali, Indonesia and China participated in

the 1st Joint Steering Committee Meeting which generated the draft of a bilateral cooperation plan, agreement on project planning, and agreement on the agreed project. Those projects can be seen in Figure 2. and Figure 3.

Another program carried by the Indonesian government under the GMF framework is maintaining and managing the marine resources of the nation. In regards to marine resources, especially seafood sovereignty, Indonesia has met and experienced many cases of illegal fishing in its sovereign waters by the neighboring states. To deal with such future cases, the Indonesian government decided to utilize the Indonesian Maritime Security Agency (*Badan Keamanan Laut/BAKAMLA*) to secure and oversee marine activities as well as ensure the security and safety within Indonesian sovereign waters. These responsibilities include the eradication of illegal fishing and developing standard developing procedures (SOP) for surveillance at sea (Kementerian PPN/Bappenas, 2015, pp. 4-39). The Indonesian government also took hardline measures by destroying and sinking the illegal foreign fishing vessels within its sovereign waters. Such measures have been taken to deal with Vietnam and Papua New Guinea fishing vessels. However, the fishing vessels originating from China have been spared from such action due to the avoidance of the Indonesian government to offend a big powerhouse like China (Salim, 2015, p. 3).

In addition, to support maritime defense and security, the Indonesian government also proposed to increase the number of defense equipment to bolster Indonesia's maritime policy across all dimensions (Kementerian PPN/Bappenas, 2015, pp. 2-22). According to Indonesian Defense White Paper 2015, material development is directed at the modernization and/or replacement of defense and non-defense equipment (Kementerian Pertahanan Republik Indonesia, 2015, p. 117). The Indonesian government, as claimed in its medium-term development plan for 2015-2019, targeted to acquire new 30 patrol vessels (Class I-IV) with IDR 126 billion (US\$ 8 million) fund allocation

(Kementerian PPN/Bappenas, 2015, p. 505). The Indonesian government also proposed IDR 1,784 billion (US\$ 124 million) fund allocation for maritime defense and non-defense equipment modernization.

In the second term of President Jokowi's administration, GMF is no longer the priority of Indonesia's foreign policy. It suddenly vanished from Indonesia's political discussion. Even during President Jokowi's inauguration speech in his second term, he neither mentioned the word maritime nor foreign policy. Retno Marsudi, the re-appointed foreign minister, also did not mention a word about GMF or maritime foreign policy. Indonesia's outlook turned to focus on infrastructure, human capital, regulatory and bureaucratic reforms, and economic transformation in a broader sense (Laksmana, 2019). Though, the medium-term development plan for 2020-2024 inquired that there is an increase in maritime defense and nondefense equipment modernization, and there is no longer any maritime fulcrum mentioned as it has been on 2015-2019 (Kementerian PPN/Bappenas, 2020, p. 525). Although the term the global maritime fulcrum is no longer used by the Indonesian government under the second term of President Jokowi's leadership, the Indonesian government still paid attention to the former projects and/or programs of GMF. The Indonesian government re-branded those former projects and/or programs of GMF into infrastructure development or as the authors mentioned nation-building.

One of the prominent former projects and/or programs of GMF is now rebranded as an Indonesian special economic zone (*Kawasan Ekonomi Khusus/KEK*) which we can see clearly that there are many traces of previous projects and/or programs cooperation under the GMF framework (Figure 5). Furthermore, with the COVID-19 outbreak in Indonesia in early March 2020, the focus of the Indonesian government is divided into managing the COVID-19 outbreak and preserving its economic development. This situation added fuel to put GMF into the least concern of the Indonesian government. However,

we must be clear on one thing even without the COVID-19 outbreak, GMF itself will no longer become President Jokowi's second-term doctrine or re-surface as Indonesia's grand strategy for now. It can be said that GMF is a set of development plans focusing on domestic performance rather than a well-developed foreign policy to change Indonesia standing in the international arena. GMF aimed to transform its infrastructure deficit and enhance its economic performance as well as become a political project to win electoral votes in 2019 (Lane, 2015, p. 8; Negara, 2015, pp. 9-10; Lalisang & Candra, 2020, p. 7).

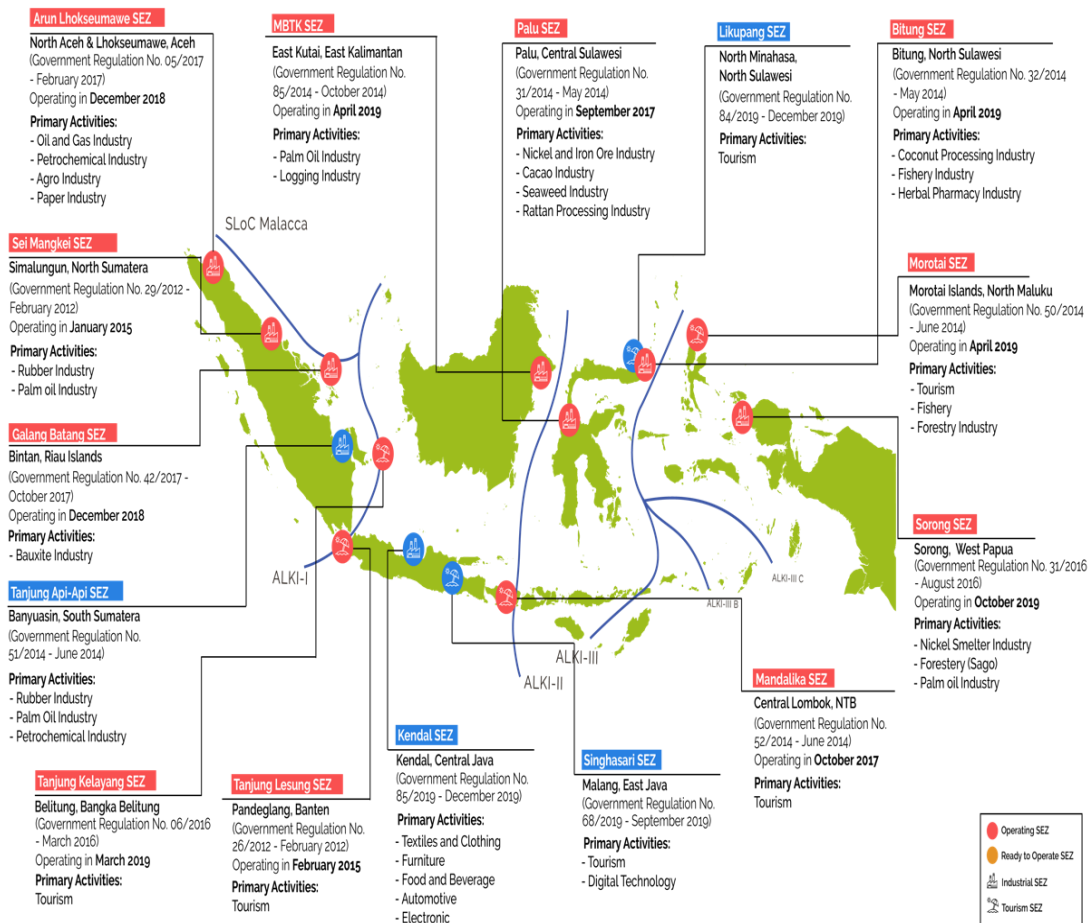


Figure 5. Indonesian Special Economic Zone Map

Source: Dewan Nasional Kawasan Ekonomi Khusus Republik Indonesia (<https://kek.go.id/peta-sebaran-kek>)

Belt and Road Initiative Implementations Pre-Covid-19 Outbreaks

Many international mass media portrayed the BRI as similar to the U.S. government's strategy when implementing the Marshall Plan in 2014. The general assumption was motivated by the similarity of the goals, such as strengthening economic internationalization, building diplomatic support, and gaining alliance power (Łasak & Linden, 2019, p. 7). However, Wang Yi, China's foreign minister, refused this media portrayal. For Beijing, BRI was formed based on the value of togetherness to build advanced cooperation and integration as an international community (Ministry of Foreign Affairs People's Republic of China, 2018). This also can be trackbacked to Xi Jinping's ideas about the China Dream when he was promoted as the Chairman of the Communist Party in 2013. China Dream is a narrative to re-craft the glory of the past and makes it the orientation for the future. Subsequently, the China Dream is not only limited to the Asian region yet to other beneficial regions such as Europe and Africa. After he was appointed as president, Xi Jinping also promoted his thoughts in many international forums. One of which was in 2013, he visited Kazakhstan and delivered his speech entitled "Promote People-to-People Friendship and Create a Better Future" at Kazakhstan's Nazarbayev University. His speech explained his foreign policy views to bring back its glory as happened during the Han Dynasty (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 2013). This spirit later also manifested in the implementation of the BRI, at least according to China's perspective.

In the first and second years, only ten countries formally joined BRI by signing an MoU (Memorandum of Understanding). However, it developed rapidly since 2015, more countries joined BRI and China succeeded in expanding its regional cooperation to Latin America in 2017 (Hillman & Sacks, 2021). In the same year, BRI became included in the Constitution of the Chinese Communist Parties and made it strengthen its activities and programs (Hillman & Sacks, 2021). Indonesia is one of the countries participating in BRI.

Before Xi Jinping became president, China's foreign minister, Wang Yi, had made a state visit to Indonesia in May 2013 (Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Perth, 2013). The agenda included an invitation to have beneficial cooperation in the Xi Jinping era, reach an agreement to maintain stability and peace between China and ASEAN, and an agreement on the South China Sea (Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Perth, 2013).

Furthermore, BRI is used to facilitate developing countries, both in Asia and European countries, to seize developed countries. Thus, they can compete in the competitive world (Łasak & Linden, 2019, p. 20). Therefore, this initiative cannot be compared to Marshall Plan, which has geostrategic interests to create preponderant alliance forces and stem power to ward off the parties which are considered a threat (Mitchell, 2018).

However, the assumption for the similarities between the BRI and Marshall Plan is none other than the balance of power between China and the U.S. These two countries are trying to gain dominance, either in economics or politics. Politically, the Beijing government wants to be the leader of the world by spreading non-liberal values. Meanwhile, economically, China is trying to lead the Industrial Revolution 4.0 by massive production and trade with countries worldwide (Doshi, 2021).

The BRI implementation in 2013 has increased the trade value between China and the BRI's countries, as shown in Figure 6. The trade volume increase was relatively stable. The graph shows that China has extensive influence and role under the auspices of BRI. This situation gives the impression that BRI is a "debt-trap diplomacy" by providing debt with a particular interest rate and giving infrastructure development assistance. Most BRI countries are categorized as developing countries. Thus, it causes debt sustainability (Gerstel, 2018). However, based on data compiled by UCLD-ASPAC from World Bank's TDC360, BRI's programs show an increase in export activities by up to 28 percent in the last three years (United Cities and Local Government Asia-

Pacific, 2021).

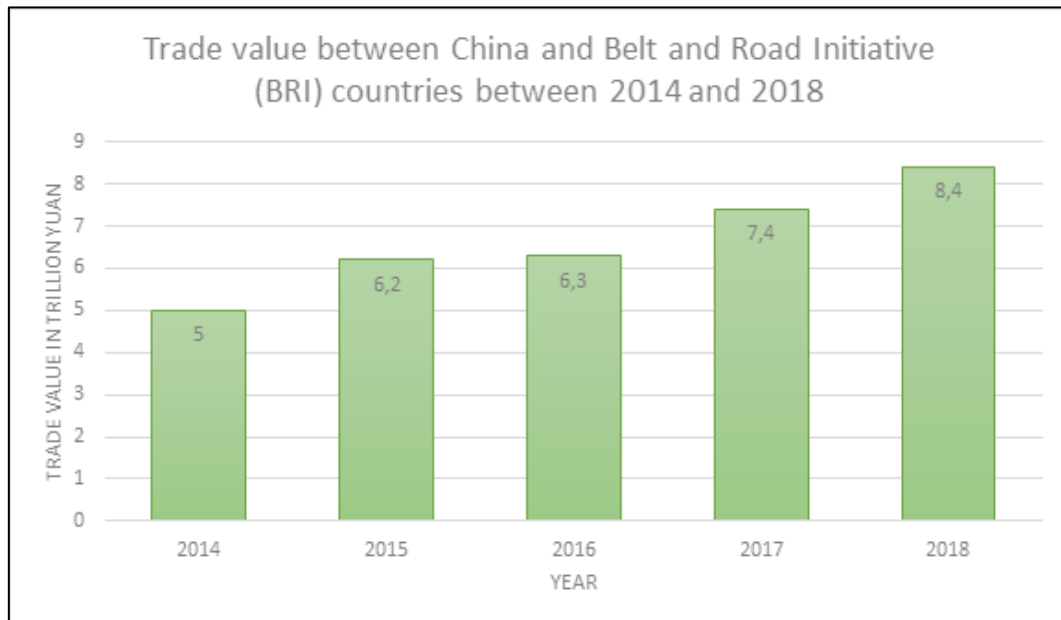


Figure 6. Trade value between China and Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

Source: Textor (2020)

To refute this assumption, the Chinese government announced five main pillars of BRI, which are policy coordination, facilities connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration, and people-to-people exchanges (United Nations, 2019). These are conceptual pillars that can be translated into real-life progress for all people. To pursue its dreams, Beijing sets three main stages which are (Islam, 2019, p. 13)

1. First stage: Investment

Investing in public infrastructures, such as building railway lines and ports, and developing energy. This stage aims to advance the economy and reduce poverty.

2. Second Stage: Industrialization

China plans to build and develop industrial areas, tourism, and other service industries. This industry might provide more extensive job opportunities, thus national income or GDP increases for BRI's partner countries.

3. Third Stage: Connection

Developing equitable internet and road networks has become one of the goals of the establishment of BRI. The Chinese government projects this development to reach up to 3 billion middle-class people by 2020.

These steps are then implemented in many regions of the world, as can be seen in Figure 4. Below are the details of countries that are members of BRI economic corridors:

Table 1. Economies located along the BRI corridors

Region	BRI Economies	Total
East Asia and the Pacific	Brunei, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong (China), Indonesia, Lao, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vietnam	15
Europe and Central Asia	Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan	30
South Asia	Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.	8
The Middle East and North Africa	Bahrein, Egypt, Djibouti, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, West Bank and Gaza, Yemen.	16
Sub-Saharan Africa	Kenya, Tanzania	2

Source: (Stefano, Iapadre, & Salvati, 2021, p. 6)

Based on Table 1., the majority of member states are categorized as developing countries. Investment in public infrastructure development projected in BRI positively relates to ease in the economic sector, such as distribution of goods and services, administrative activities, and productivity. This BRI is an excellent opportunity to advance their economy and increase their national income. However, the provision of such investment might become a boomerang for the recipient countries because it might make the recipient dependent on the giver.

Morgenthau (1962) argues that international aid is a bribe because, in the future, the recipient country will owe and indirectly has to reach the

objectives economic needs of the giver country. Thus, when the recipient country has succeeded in enhancing its economy because of the giver's aid, the recipient country is more likely to be indebted politically and economically (Morgenthau, 1962, p. 209)

As discussed earlier, the rivalry between the United States and China led to a competition to achieve broader influence in many world regions. By implementing BRI, the Chinese government prefers to cooperate with countries not allied with the United States or do not have the same ideology as the United States. As one of BRI's members, we argue that Indonesia's current position tends to be neither too "Western" nor too "Eastern" in international politics and more opportunist because Indonesia takes advantage of both sides.

Before implementing the BRI program in Indonesia, the Chinese government signed strategic cooperation on the economy and financial sector, trade, fisheries, and tourism sectors during the SBY administration in 2013 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 2013). Moreover, in a press release published on the website of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Chinese government has made documents containing the *China-Indonesia Five-Year Development Program for Economic and Trade Cooperation* and the *Agreement Between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Republic of Indonesia on Indonesia-China Integrated Industrial Parks*. In the financial sector, these countries agreed to have a currency value policy of 100 billion RMB.

However, the agreement in the maritime sector is contradictory to their relations which are at odds due to the Dash Line claim. Although Indonesia is not the claimant, the tension between the two countries grew as a consequence of overlapping with the EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone) of Natuna Island which is part of Indonesia's territory (Wangke, 2020). Not only one-sided claim, the Coast Guard of China often violated to come across Natuna Island EEZ, which

indicates that China is against the UNCLOS Law which in particular of Natuna Islands EEZ (Wangke, 2020). One example happened in 2016, the China coast guard insisted on extricating a Chinese fishing boat caught by the Maritime and Fisheries Monitoring Task Force. The vessel was going to be sunk under the instruction of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Susi Pudjiastuti (Halim, Lubis, & Ribka, 2016). Although there is consistency over the Natuna sea area, the Indonesian government continues to carry out sustainable cooperation with China. After Jokowi took office in 2014, China and Indonesia showed increasingly intensive relations. In the first year of his administration, Jokowi had diplomatic visits to various countries to introduce his planned GMF vision. The first destination of the visit was China which attended the APEC meeting in November 2014 (Witular & Widhiarto, 2014). Then, in March 2015, Jokowi signed an MoU, some of which were on the economy and infrastructure (Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Havana, 2015).

A few months later, in September, Indonesia approved the construction of the Jakarta-Bandung high-speed rail. This collaboration is one of the prominent cooperation between Indonesia under the framework of GMF and China with its BRI is the Jakarta-Bandung high-speed rail (JHSR) project which costs up to \$5.9 billion (Lai, 2019). Besides the JHSR project, there is also the Qingshan Morowali Industrial Park project in Sulawesi which has succeeded in creating up to 30,000 jobs for local people (Xinli, 2019). The amount of investment and debt given to Indonesia under BRI is considered to make Indonesia the highest recipient in ASEAN. This is because Indonesia received up to US\$ 171 billion, followed by Vietnam with US\$ 152 billion (Pant & Saha, 2021). Nonetheless, the JHSR delayed and required a re-calculation of the financing scheme due to a cost overrun of up to 1.39 billion dollars (Ramadhan, 2021). One of the reasons this could happen is because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic has hampered the development process due to the health protocol policy. In addition, the land acquisition is difficult to predict

when it will be completed (Ramadhan, 2021).

On the other hand, China has to face drastic changes in the economic situation due to the strict implementation of the lockdown and focuses on restoring its domestic economy first. As many as 240,000 companies in China went bankrupt, some of which permanently closed their companies (Mouritz, 2020, p. 119). Countries that are partners with China under the auspices of the BRI are also experiencing a sluggish economy and require the government to take various policies to rescue their economy and improve their healthcare. Before the pandemic, 23 countries were already in a difficult situation due to debts provided through BRI (Mouritz, 2020, p. 121). In addition, Chinese Foreign Minister, Wang Xiaolong, said at least 20% of BRI projects were seriously affected by the pandemic (Reuters, 2020).

Based on the data from the National Bureau of Statistics of China, the first two months of the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in a decline in various economic sectors, such as the reduction of goods and services production, derivation in investment, and international trade balance deficit and unemployment (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2020). Furthermore, based on Figure 7, China experienced a decline in GDP level of up to 6.8%, or the lowest since 1992 (BBC, 2020).

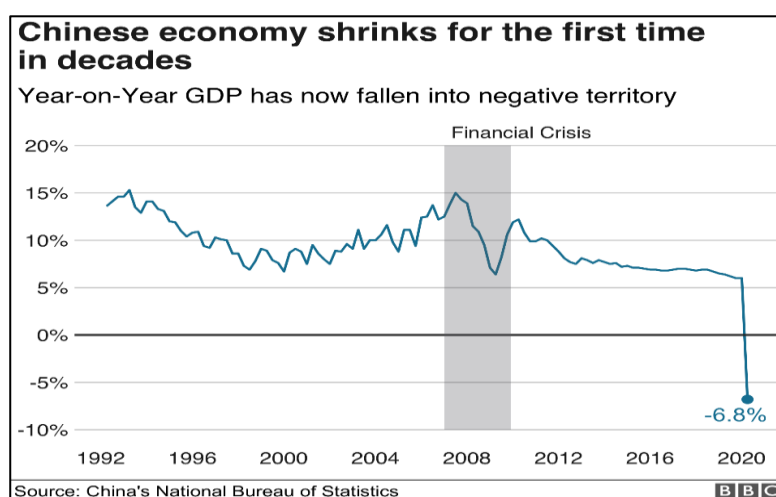


Figure 7. Chinese economy shrinks for the first time in decades

Source: BBC (2020)

Despite experiencing social and economic problems, the Chinese government managed to experience a trade surplus of up to US\$ 103.25 billion in the first month of 2021 (Reuters, 2021). In the same year, China published the 14th Plan for 2021 to 2025. The Chinese government approved the Plan through the National People's Congress (NPC) in March 2021. The plans aim to encourage export activities, increase capital-intensive accumulation, innovation economy, increase productivity, development in the service sector and reduce inequality (Aglietta, Bai, & Macaire, 2021).

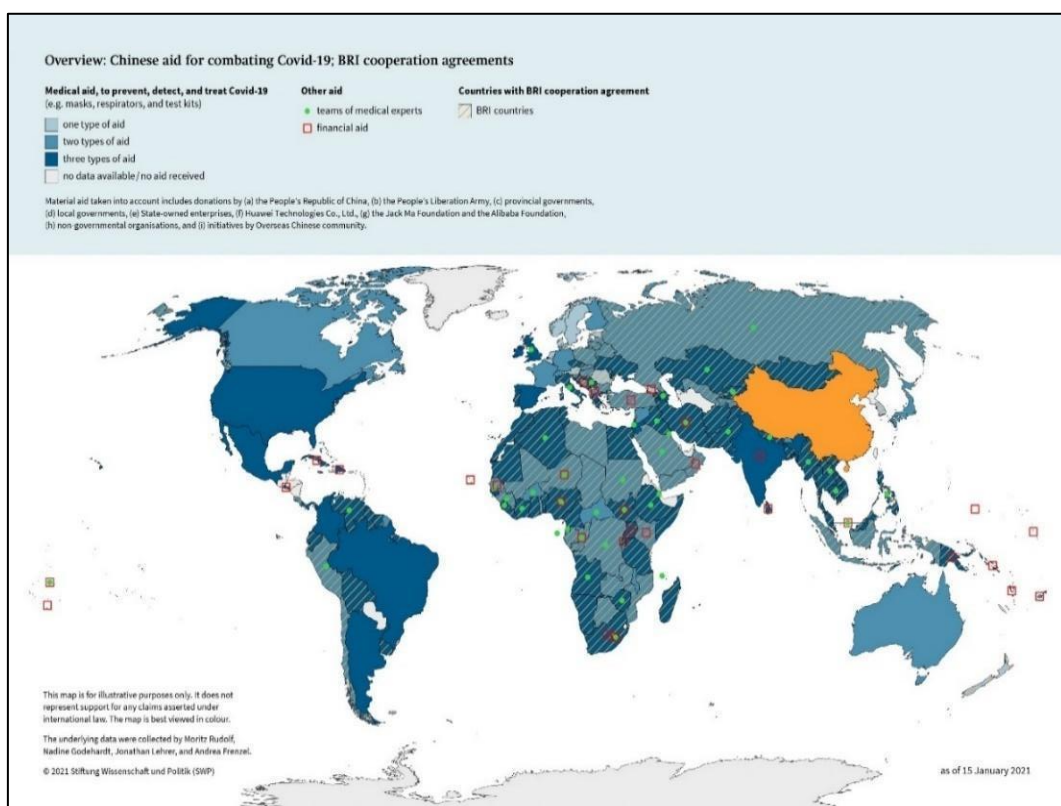


Figure 8. China and BRI Countries on Combating Covid-19

Source: Rudolf (2021)

The pandemic of Covid-19 has led the new program within BRI on health cooperation by distributing vaccines. This cooperation was approved by 28 countries, one of which was Indonesia, held at the Asia and Pacific High-level Conference on Belt and Road Cooperation on June 23rd, 2021 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 2021). Based on Figure 8. and Figure 9, it can be seen that China does not only cooperate with countries

under the auspices of BRI. Diplomacy in the field of Health is one of the main things in the post-Covid-19 BRI program as a form of promotion and to connect between many regions (Rudolf, 2021).

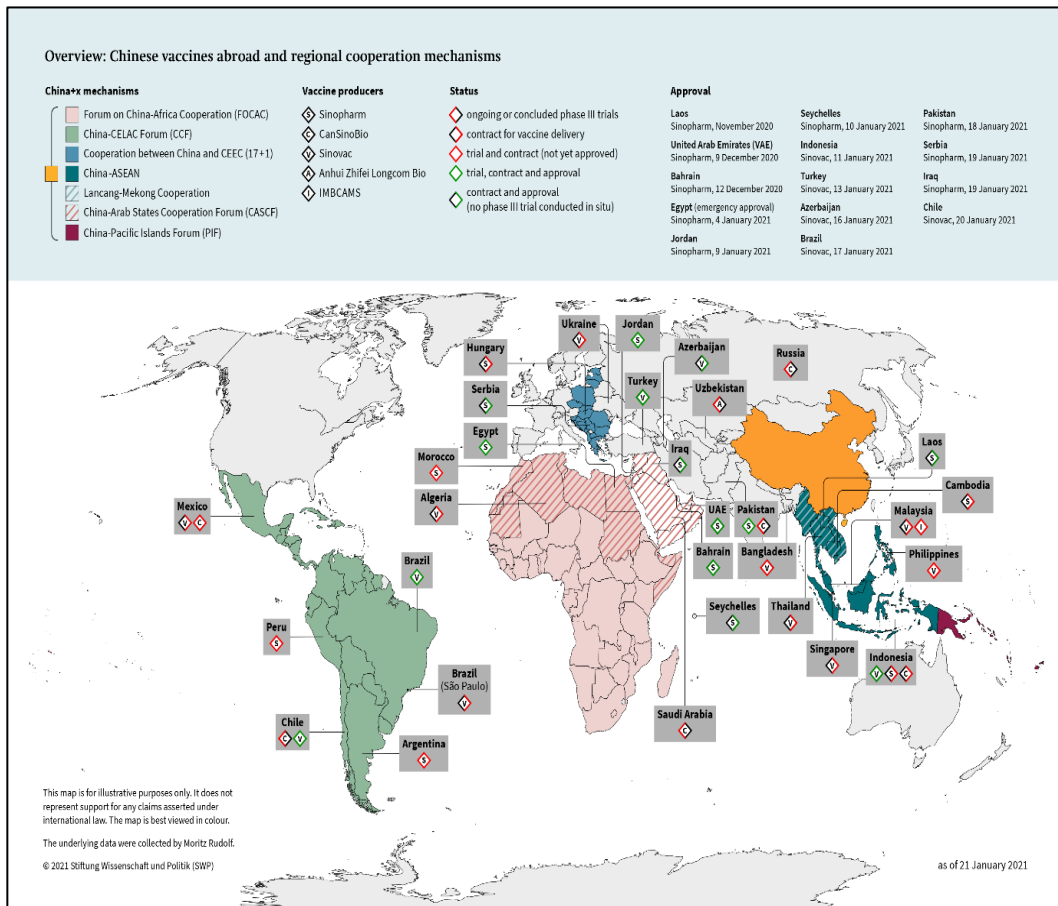


Figure 9. Chinese Vaccines around the World

Source: Rudolf (2021)

In its development, the presence of the Belt Road Initiative (BRI) for Indonesia still raises pros and cons. Some think that BRI can benefit Indonesia. This opinion was stated by the General Chairperson of the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KADIN), Rosan P. Roeslani, who argued that Indonesia and China had the same interests, particularly in infrastructure development in Indonesia (Kurmala, 2021). Of course, this is closely related to the program that is being intensified by Jokowi, that infrastructure is one way to support the economy. This is not limited to infrastructure related to the distribution chain such as roads, rail, and ports,

but also digital infrastructure. Thus, the cooperation between Indonesia and China through BRI is considered to be able to accelerate infrastructure development in Indonesia.

Meanwhile, on the other hand, it should be understood that this cooperation is also seen as a debt trap for the recipient countries. Statistical data on Indonesia's Foreign Debt (SULNI) for February 2022, shows that China for Indonesia is the fourth largest debtor country. It was stated that Indonesia's foreign debt originating from China increased by 0.76% to US\$ 20.78 billion (Sandi, 2022). The data shows the large nominal debt that Indonesia has to China. Of course, this needs to be given special attention so that Indonesia is not trapped in debt which of course can get bigger.

Lessons learned from countries falling victim to China's debt trap. At least several countries have become victims of China's debt. Sri Lanka, for example, applied for debt to build port infrastructure. It was recorded that they had a debt of US\$ 8 billion. Previously, it was known that China financed the Hambantota port project located on the southern coast of Sri Lanka through debt relief amounting to US\$ 1.5 billion. However, due to not being able to pay the debt, Sri Lanka was required to sign a contract stipulating that the port must serve the Chinese company for 99 years. Another example is Zimbabwe must owe to China an accumulated value of up to the US \$ 4 million or Rp. 54.8 trillion (exchange rate of Rp. 13,700). As a result of not being able to manage its debt properly and being unable to pay its debts, Zimbabwe had to change its currency to the Yuan in exchange for debt relief (Afriyadi, 2021). What is experienced by the two countries, of course, can be used as a lesson for Indonesia? The intention to build infrastructure to boost the economy should not be a blunder. The government of course must be very careful and of course, determine the priority scale for what they apply for foreign loans. They must also consider that the loan amount proposed can be repaid so as not to backfire on the country itself.

CONCLUSION

Indonesia and China have modified their foreign policy, respectively GMF and BRI, to correspond to the global needs and the growing interest of their nation. In this particular case, both Indonesia's GMF and China's BRI modified the implementation of their established policy. The modification came in the form of program changes. Indonesia and China changed the way to address and the instruments to achieve the goals laid down in the early days. Thus, in short, the purposes of Indonesia's GMF and China's BRI remain the same while what and how it is done are changing. On the Indonesian side, although the term GMF is no longer mentioned in the second term of Jokowi's administration, the GMF goals are still being preserved. Indonesia still aims for nation-building through the development of infrastructure to boost its domestic performance. While with China's BRI the program changes came in the form of the implementation of its foreign policy. China attempts to adjust the way to address the instruments used to achieve its goals as a big powerhouse and to boost its economic performance to the global situation

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