



Indonesia's Diplomatic Maneuvers in the Current Geopolitical Situation

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Abstract

Background: Indonesia's recent engagement with BRICS marked a strategic recalibration of its foreign policy amid intensifying great-power rivalries.

Objective: This study aimed to examine how Indonesia employed a diplomatic hedging strategy to balance its relations with BRICS and the United States within an emerging multipolar world order.

Methods: Using a qualitative research design that integrated document analysis and elite interviews, this paper analyzed Indonesia's diplomatic discourse, policy statements, and trade relations during the 2022–2025 period.

Results: The findings revealed that Indonesia's multi-alignment behavior represented an adaptive evolution of its *bebas aktif* doctrine, emphasizing pragmatic engagement with competing powers while avoiding overdependence on any single bloc. This hedging behavior was manifested through selective economic cooperation, diversified partnerships, and cautious political signaling.

Conclusion: This study contributed to the growing literature on middle-power diplomacy by offering empirical insights into Southeast Asia's strategic autonomy under global systemic change. This paper argues that Indonesia's multi-alignment policy strengthened regional stability while preserving strategic sovereignty within ASEAN's centrality framework.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, the global geopolitical landscape has undergone significant shifts (Yongnian & Xin, 2017). The rise of China, the resurgence of Russia, and increasing calls from the Global South for reform in multilateral governance have challenged the post-Cold War U.S.-centered order. BRICS, comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, was initially established as an economic grouping (Amaechi, 2020). However, it has since expanded its goals to include political influence, development financing, and alternative visions of multipolar governance. As of January 2025, Indonesia officially joined BRICS, becoming the first Southeast Asian country to become a member.

For Indonesia, a middle power located in a strategically contested region, this decision may represent a significant shift in its foreign policy (Karim, 2026; Shekhar, 2018). Historically, Indonesia has followed the *Bebas-Aktif* ("free and active") diplomatic doctrine, aiming to avoid alignment with any major bloc while promoting non-alignment and neutrality (Yahya, 2023). However, amid growing great-power rivalry and geopolitical fragmentation, maintaining this stance has become increasingly challenging.

Indonesia's decision to join BRICS can be viewed in multiple ways: as an economic move to access alternative development financing, including through the New Development Bank; as a

geopolitical statement advocating reform in global governance; as a means of balancing its relations with Western powers and China/Russia; and as an effort to position itself as a leader in Global South discussions.

Although some BRICS initiatives have been interpreted as alternatives to Western-dominated institutions, the degree of divergence varies across issue areas and member states. Western powers, including the United States and its allies, have expressed varying levels of skepticism depending on the specific BRICS agenda under consideration. This move also carries risks because BRICS is often perceived as a counterweight to Western-dominated institutions such as the Bretton Woods institutions, the G7, and the liberal international order (Wso, 2025). Therefore, Indonesia must carefully navigate the complex task of leveraging BRICS membership while maintaining key partnerships in trade, investment, security, and diplomacy (Al Putra et al., 2025; Setiawan, 2025; Syamsudin, 2025).

In short, Indonesia is now operating in a more contested and multipolar environment. Its diplomatic approach must be nuanced, strategic, and, at times, experimental. This study aims to analyze how Indonesia's foreign policy and diplomatic approaches are changing in light of its BRICS membership and to evaluate the impact of this development on Indonesia-U.S. relations and Indonesia's position among Western-aligned actors.

This study is primarily informed by the literature on hedging, middle-power diplomacy, and strategic autonomy. Hedging theory, as articulated by Kuik (2016), provides the analytical lens for understanding how states pursue mixed strategies that combine elements of engagement and balancing to maximize opportunities while minimizing risks under great-power competition. Middle-power diplomacy theory explains Indonesia's capacity to leverage institutional frameworks and coalition-building to amplify its influence beyond its material capabilities (Karim, 2018). Strategic autonomy, rooted in Indonesia's *Bebas-Aktif* ("independent and active") foreign policy doctrine, offers a normative framework for evaluating the extent to which BRICS membership represents continuity with, or departure from, historical diplomatic principles (Leifer, 1983; Sukma, 1995). Together, these perspectives provide complementary analytical tools for understanding how Indonesia seeks to maximize opportunities while minimizing strategic risks under conditions of intensifying great-power competition.

While Indonesia claims that joining BRICS aligns with its long-standing multi-alignment or balanced diplomacy, geopolitical pressures remain intense in practice (Mahaseth & Zainab, 2025; Nugroho et al., 2025). The challenge lies in the possibility of asymmetric dependencies, particularly in relation to China, and potential diplomatic friction with the United States and its allies, especially when BRICS policy proposals conflict with Western norms or interests, such as proposals for de-dollarization or alternative financial instruments. Furthermore, uncertainty remains regarding how Indonesia can effectively implement a flexible diplomatic strategy. What patterns will emerge. What trade-offs will be made. Will this new direction create structural tensions in Indonesia's bilateral and multilateral relations.

The core tension is this: how can Indonesia join and benefit from BRICS without provoking retaliation or distrust from the United States and its allies? What diplomatic strategies will Jakarta employ in the face of competing pressures? This research addresses these key tensions.

This study is guided by several central questions concerning Indonesia's diplomatic orientation after joining BRICS. It examines the diplomatic strategies Indonesia adopts, including hedging, balancing, bandwagoning, and selective alignment, while also exploring how BRICS membership affects Indonesia's relations with the United States and Western-aligned partners such as Europe, Japan, and Australia. The study further investigates the conditions under which Indonesia may experience diplomatic pressure, resistance, or strategic alignment from the United States in response to BRICS-related initiatives.

The objectives of this study are to identify and classify Indonesia's post-BRICS diplomatic strategies, analyze Indonesia's interactions with the United States and Western partners after BRICS accession, and examine the structural factors shaping Indonesia's diplomatic flexibility, including economic dependence, institutional capacity, domestic politics, and strategic geography. This study also aims to evaluate the sustainability and future direction of Indonesia's multi-alignment doctrine amid intensifying great-power rivalry.

This study examines Indonesia's external diplomatic activities from 2023 to 2025, with

cautious forward-looking projections extending to 2028. The analysis begins with the decision to expand BRICS and continues through the initial years following Indonesia's accession. Geographically, it focuses on Indonesia's bilateral and multilateral relationships with BRICS members, the United States, and Western-aligned partners. It should be noted that the analysis of developments beyond 2025 is projective rather than empirical, drawing on trend analysis, stated policy intentions, and expert forecasts rather than observed outcomes.

The scope of this study focuses on Indonesia's diplomatic engagement with BRICS and BRICS-related institutions, including the New Development Bank, as well as its interactions with the United States and key Western-aligned partners such as the European Union, Australia, and Japan. Major regional entities, particularly ASEAN and Indo-Pacific security frameworks, are also considered relevant where they intersect with BRICS diplomacy. However, this study does not extensively examine Indonesia's domestic politics, defense procurement, regional subnational diplomacy, or sector-specific economic modeling, except when these aspects are necessary as illustrative examples. The main emphasis remains on Indonesia's diplomatic strategies, patterns, and foreign policy behavior in a changing multipolar order.

The novelty of this research lies in its contemporary empirical focus on Indonesia's post-BRICS diplomacy, an area that remains underexplored due to the recent nature of its membership. Unlike previous studies that mostly discussed Indonesia's hedging and multi-alignment strategy before formal BRICS accession, this study analyzes how BRICS participation may reshape Indonesia's diplomatic behavior, relations with Western partners, and broader strategic posture. It contributes by integrating diplomatic theory with empirical case analysis, proposing a typology of diplomatic patterns for emerging middle powers, and offering policy insights into managing structural constraints and geopolitical trade-offs. Thus, this study fills a significant research gap by examining Indonesia's adaptive, performative, and compartmentalized diplomacy amid intensified great-power rivalry.

Hypotheses

Based on the theoretical and contextual foundations, this study proposes four hypotheses. First, Indonesia is expected to adopt a hedging diplomatic approach by avoiding full alignment with BRICS powers, particularly China and Russia, while maintaining cooperative relations with the United States and its allies (H1). Second, tensions with the United States and its allies are anticipated to remain moderate and issue-specific, primarily concerning financial architecture, currency alternatives, and intellectual property, while broader cooperation is expected to continue (H2). Third, Indonesia's institutional constraints, including limited negotiating capacity, economic dependence on China, and domestic political considerations, are likely to require selective concessions and confine its BRICS engagement to lower-risk areas (H3). Finally, as geopolitical rivalries intensify, Indonesia's current multi-alignment strategy may gradually evolve into a more selective alignment approach, reflecting the increasing difficulty of sustaining a pure hedging strategy (H4).

Literature Review

Theoretical Basis

Three concepts in International Relations theory are most relevant to Indonesia's shift toward BRICS: hedging, omni-enmeshment in ASEAN-led multilateralism, and middle-power diplomacy within a hierarchical regional order. Hedging in Southeast Asia refers to measures involving partial counterbalancing responses aimed at risk management under uncertainty. It involves balancing and binding great powers without fixed alignment. Foundational works by Evelyn Goh and Cheng-Chwee Kuik define hedging as a consistent post-Cold War alignment policy through which states pursue contradictory or compensatory policies to preserve strategic options. Scholarly debate remains over whether hedging constitutes a distinct strategy or merely a transitional phase between alignment choices (Goh, 2005; Tan, 2020). This study adopts the position that hedging is a deliberate and sustained strategy rather than a form of strategic indecision, consistent with Kuik's (2016) framework.

By contrast, omni-enmeshment involves drawing various major powers into close

economic and security ties through ASEAN-led mechanisms to generate collective interests in stability while preserving the sovereignty of smaller states. This strategy emphasizes institutional engagement to bind great powers and reduce dominance by any single actor. Works on Southeast Asia's hierarchical regional order examine regional policies as involving indirect balancing and the legitimation of extra-regional powers, notably the United States, to facilitate strategic maneuverability.

Indonesia's long-standing "independent and active" diplomacy has been understood as a set of principles guiding multi-alignment, with an emphasis on independence and active participation in multilateral rule-making. Emerging analyses suggest that non-alignment is an instrument for achieving Indonesia's foreign policy objectives, and that adaptation is necessary amid shifting great-power rivalries. These theoretical perspectives predict that Jakarta will seek benefits from the economic and diplomatic opportunities offered by BRICS without pursuing full alignment, while keeping the United States and its allies engaged.

Prior Work on Indonesia's Diplomatic Patterns

Empirical investigations of Indonesian foreign policy since the *Reformasi* period have identified pragmatic activism, selective cooperation, and risk management in Indonesia's dealings with great powers. Recent analyses suggest continuity in the "independent and active" doctrine under President Jokowi, accompanied by adaptive adjustments under President Prabowo, with attention to domestic capacity constraints and regional institutional concerns. Comparative literature on Southeast Asian hedging and grand strategy situates Indonesia within a broader trend of middle and smaller states combining reassurance and deterrence toward China while leveraging the U.S. security presence and other economic partners.

Current Evidence and Recent Literature on BRICS and U.S. Relations

Recent reports indicate that Indonesia became a formal member of BRICS in January 2025, following its declaration of intent in October 2024 and initial consultations in late 2024. Reuters and Bloomberg reports confirm Indonesia's inclusion and position it as part of a wider BRICS expansion, in which Indonesia's membership is framed as supporting reform of global financial governance and strengthening the voice of the Global South, while maintaining caution and adherence to ASEAN principles.

President Prabowo announced Indonesia's decision to join the New Development Bank (NDB) in March 2025, citing the potential for development financing in areas such as the energy transition, biodiesel, and technology as examples of the rationale behind this decision. Indonesia's statements have positioned the NDB as a complementary financing source rather than a full substitute for IMF mechanisms.

Politically, the U.S. government has directly questioned BRICS. In July 2025, President Trump threatened an additional 10% tariff on countries aligning with what he described as BRICS' "anti-American" policies. BRICS foreign ministers responded by coordinating their positions against unpredictable trade actions. Such developments provide a concrete area of disagreement—trade policy—where Indonesia's BRICS engagement may generate sporadic pressure from Washington. At the same time, internal coordination within BRICS has also been perceived as uneven; reports from ministerial gatherings suggest fissures and challenges in crafting robust joint statements, thereby providing Indonesia with maneuvering space.

Combining these recent developments with theoretical insights yields several findings. First, Jakarta's BRICS membership functions as a hedging policy by diversifying funding sources through the NDB, increasing bargaining leverage in global negotiations, and connecting Indonesia with Global South reformist discourses while maintaining cooperation alternatives with the United States, the European Union, Japan, and Australia. Second, the threats primarily arise from specific issues related to U.S. reactions, such as tariffs and technology restrictions, rather than from a broad strategic realignment. This finding is consistent with studies that forecast issue-specific disagreements under hedging, but not overall alignment. Third, ASEAN-centered omnimeshment remains a stabilizing mechanism for Indonesia, enabling it to navigate relations with both BRICS and Western allies through ASEAN-led configurations, temper competition, promote inclusive norms, and preserve its independent and active foreign policy orientation.

Most previous academic research was conducted before Indonesia's 2025 accession and was therefore based on earlier intentions and plans. Few recent Indonesia-specific studies have examined post-accession bargaining, NDB project pipelines, and responses to U.S. trade policies. This research addresses that gap by combining recent news coverage from Reuters, Bloomberg, and The Jakarta Post with theory-based analysis of Indonesia's diplomatic actions. This approach connects real-time evidence on BRICS-related choices with established concepts of hedging, enmeshment, and hierarchical order. This assessment is supported by a systematic review of academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, using search terms such as "Indonesia BRICS membership" and "Indonesia hedging BRICS," which yielded fewer than ten peer-reviewed articles specifically addressing Indonesia's post-accession diplomatic behavior as of mid-2025.

In sum, contemporary research increasingly understands Indonesia's BRICS membership as part of a multi-alignment strategy. Jakarta seeks developmental and status-related benefits while buffering against U.S. and allied pushback through ASEAN-led platforms, issue-based compartmentalization, and selective reassurance. Empirical evidence after January 2025 reaffirms and refines classical Southeast Asian hedging theory, making Indonesia a crucial case for understanding middle-power diplomacy amid rising great-power competition.

Indonesia was selected as a single-case study based on three criteria: (1) it is the largest economy and most populous nation to join BRICS in the 2025 expansion, making it a critical case for understanding middle-power adaptation to multipolar dynamics; (2) it maintains significant economic relationships with both BRICS members and Western powers, creating observable tension points; and (3) its *bebas aktif* foreign policy doctrine provides a unique normative context for analyzing hedging behavior (Yin, 2018).

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative, multi-method research design that was primarily explanatory in orientation, with descriptive and cautiously predictive elements, to provide a comprehensive, evidence-based account of Indonesia's diplomatic patterns following its accession to BRICS and their impact on its relations with the United States and its allies. The approach included document analysis, interviews with key figures, and process tracing to ensure thorough analysis and reliable findings.

The research began with data collection from a wide range of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources included official government documents such as policy statements, speeches, press releases, and treaty texts from Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs, and BRICS organizations, including the New Development Bank. These documents provided official insights into Indonesia's declared diplomatic goals and policy instruments. At the same time, official statements and policy briefings from U.S. agencies, particularly the State Department and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, were reviewed to understand Washington's official positions and responses. Secondary data were sourced from peer-reviewed articles, credible think tank analyses (e.g., East-West Center, CSIS, and ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute), and current reporting from reputable news outlets such as Reuters, Bloomberg, and The Jakarta Post, to track developments from 2023 to 2025.

In-depth interviews with Indonesian elite diplomats, foreign policy experts, and regional policy analysts constituted a second major source of data. Semi-structured interviews, conducted in person and through encrypted video calls, facilitated comparative analysis of policy narratives and revealed nuances not visible in official texts. Participant sampling ensured coverage of individuals directly involved in BRICS policy debates or U.S.–Indonesia bilateral negotiations. Interviews were digitally recorded with participants' consent and transcribed for analysis. A total of 12 semi-structured interviews were conducted between March and August 2025, selected through purposive and snowball sampling: four senior diplomats from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, three foreign policy analysts from leading think tanks, three trade policy officials, and two ASEAN-based regional analysts. To mitigate selection bias inherent in elite interviewing, interview data were triangulated with documentary evidence and media analysis.

Data protection and management prioritized reproducibility and confidentiality. All electronic materials, including transcripts, official documents, and press releases, were securely stored on encrypted institutional servers. File naming followed ISO 8601 date conventions to ensure consistency and version control. Backups were maintained on encrypted external drives updated weekly, and personal data obtained from interviews were anonymized using alphanumeric codes to ensure confidentiality.

This study acknowledged several methodological limitations. First, reliance on elite interviews introduced potential selection bias, as senior officials may present strategically managed narratives. This was partially mitigated through triangulation with documentary and media sources. Second, analysis of developments beyond 2025 was necessarily projective, based on stated policy intentions and trend extrapolation rather than observed outcomes. Third, the single-case design, while enabling in-depth analysis, limited the generalizability of findings to other middle powers navigating similar multipolar pressures. Fourth, the rapid pace of geopolitical change meant that some findings required updating as new developments emerged.

The analysis combined both inductive and deductive methods. First, process tracing identified decision-critical junctures in Indonesia's BRICS membership, mapping linkages between external geopolitical pressures, domestic political-economic factors, and policy outcomes. Second, qualitative content analysis was applied to primary documents and interview transcripts using NVivo software. International Relations theory-based coding categories were iteratively refined to identify emerging patterns. Thematic matrices connected Indonesian actions to U.S. and allied responses, enabling structured analysis of specific tensions such as trade tariffs and shifts in security cooperation.

Reliability and validity were ensured through methodological triangulation, involving comparison of official statements with independent media reports and interview data. All phases of analysis, from initial coding to thematic synthesis, were documented through an audit trail to support replication and reproducibility. The research adhered to ethical standards consistent with the American Association for Applied Linguistics and the Indonesian Social Science Ethics Committee, including informed consent, voluntary participation, and the right to withdraw.

Finally, the conclusion synthesized coded evidence to evaluate key hypotheses regarding Indonesia's hedging strategy and its implications for U.S.–Indonesia relations. Findings were compared with existing literature on hedging and multi-alignment to refine theoretical models. By combining rigorous document analysis, expert interviews, and structured data management, this methodology provided a credible and reproducible framework for examining Indonesia's evolving diplomatic stance in a rapidly changing global order.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Diplomatic Patterns: Hedging, Selective Alignment, and Issue Compartmentalisation Hedging remains dominant but with adaptive calibration

One clear finding is that Indonesia continues to adopt a hedging approach, albeit with more active adjustments since joining BRICS. Instead of moving toward outright alignment or opposition, Jakarta combines diversified ties, especially in finance and development, with diplomacy aimed at reassuring traditional partners. Many interviewees described this as “hedging 2.0,” a more assertive, selective form of hedging in which the state leans slightly toward new partners while maintaining strong safeguards with existing ones. This evolved posture may be conceptualised as “Hedging 2.0,” a strategy characterised by proactive diversification, compartmentalised engagement, and performative reassurance signalling, distinguishing it from the more passive hedging traditionally described in the literature (Kuik, 2008).

For example, Indonesia joined the New Development Bank (NDB) of BRICS in March 2025, citing the need to “accelerate its economic transformation” and expand access to alternative financing for infrastructure. At the same time, Jakarta has moved quickly to reduce trade tensions with the United States, including a July 2025 agreement to lower proposed U.S. tariffs from 32% to 19% and a commitment to importing U.S. energy and agricultural products. In its internal diplomatic communications, Jakarta often states that BRICS membership complements, rather than replaces, its engagement with Bretton Woods institutions and Western partners.

In summary, while hedging remains the foundation, Indonesia's approach is now more proactive. Jakarta seeks to gain benefits such as alternative financing within the BRICS context, while maintaining built-in safeguards to protect its other strategic relationships.

Issue-by-issue compartmentalization

Another important pattern is compartmentalization. Indonesia addresses BRICS-linked initiatives mainly in "low-risk" areas (development, climate, and soft governance) while keeping sensitive sectors (security, defense, critical technologies) aligned with Western frameworks.

For instance, Jakarta has avoided pushing for radical changes within BRICS toward complete de-dollarization or the creation of a new global currency. While some BRICS members discuss these ideas, de-dollarization remains primarily aspirational.

In multilateral BRICS forums (such as the 2025 summit), Indonesia has focused on shared priorities related to global governance reform, climate, health, and inclusive development rather than engaging in assertive geopolitical positioning or confrontation.

Interviews confirmed that Indonesia's Ministry of Finance and other economic ministries were discouraged from making binding commitments in BRICS sectors that might conflict with U.S. trade regulations, intellectual property rights, or digital governance standards. By selectively aligning in non-sensitive areas and avoiding overlap with contentious issues, Jakarta maintains strategic flexibility and reduces the risk of friction with Western partners.

Multi-vector diplomacy and omni-enmeshment via ASEAN

A third pattern is the continued use of omni-enmeshment. This refers to engaging BRICS, the United States/Western bloc, and regional frameworks, especially ASEAN, simultaneously, positioning Indonesia as a bridge. Indonesia's diplomacy seeks to encourage both sides to adopt ASEAN-based norms, thereby reducing a zero-sum outlook.

Leading up to and following its accession to BRICS, Jakarta advocated for ASEAN to act as an intermediary between BRICS and Asia-Pacific institutions, proposing "ASEAN Plus BRICS" dialogues. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed that these proposals were actively considered.

Indonesia's ambassadors in ASEAN capitals were instructed to organize side events during BRICS summits to involve ASEAN partners, thereby blending BRICS and ASEAN networks. Official statements emphasize that Indonesia's diplomatic approach prioritizes ASEAN centrality, framing its BRICS participation as an addition, not a subtraction, of its ASEAN role. In this way, Indonesia's diplomacy is not solely directed toward BRICS. Instead, it is network-based, integrating into broader multilateral linkages to reduce pressures from major powers.

Conditional reassurance signalling

To mitigate distrust from the West, a frequent diplomatic strategy is reassurance signaling. This involves making public statements about continued alignment in defense, security, and shared values, particularly in bilateral discussions with the U.S. and the EU, regarding cooperation on climate, counterterrorism, maritime security, and democratic values.

Jakarta frequently stresses that BRICS membership does not signify a strategic shift toward China or Russia. Analysts note that Indonesia presents itself as a "bridge-builder" rather than a challenger. Indonesia has reiterated its commitment to the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) and other U.S.-led initiatives, even as it joins BRICS.

In July 2025, when U.S. President Trump threatened an additional 10% tariff on countries adopting "anti-American" policies within the BRICS framework, Indonesia quickly clarified that its engagement with BRICS was voluntary, issue-specific, and not aimed at opposing the U.S. In summary, reassurance signaling is a recurring pattern aimed at preventing sweeping reprisals from the West.

Gradual shift toward selective alignment

Although complete alignment is not pursued, the data indicate that Indonesia is slowly moving toward selective alignment, choosing to align with specific axes or projects when the

benefits outweigh the risks. This is still developing, but it is evident in Indonesia's willingness to participate in Chinese-led infrastructure projects or Russian energy partnerships under the BRICS framework, subject to certain conditions.

For instance, through BRICS, Indonesia has suggested the possibility of preferential energy imports from Russia as part of its energy security strategy. Some policymakers view BRICS membership as an opportunity to secure more favorable terms with Russia than non-members might receive.

At the same time, Indonesia has been cautious not to deepen military or technical integration with Russia or China beyond established norms; its arms modernization continues to rely on a diversified set of suppliers. In elite interviews, diplomats acknowledged that in the future, Indonesia might become more aligned with BRICS-led initiatives (such as digital infrastructure or AI governance) when these initiatives coincide with domestic priorities. Thus, a gradual shift can be observed from pure hedging toward selective alignment in areas that support Indonesia's development and status objectives.

Indonesia-United States / Western Relations: Friction, Adaptation, and Convergence

Trade diplomacy as primary friction vector

The primary area of disagreement between Jakarta and Washington, as well as other allied Western countries, is trade policy. The following dynamics emerged: U.S. pressure took the form of tariff threats. President Trump warned on July 6, 2025, that any country aligning with BRICS “anti-American policies” would face a 10% tariff. Indonesia faced a potential 32% tariff on its goods if it strayed too far from U.S. trade expectations and regulatory norms. To avoid severe retaliation, Indonesia offered a \$34 billion package to U.S. partners, committing to import U.S. energy and agricultural goods and reduce import barriers. Ultimately, this arrangement reduced the threatened tariffs to 19%, with Indonesia agreeing to lower barriers on more than 99% of U.S. goods and eliminate most non-tariff barriers.

As part of the deal, Indonesia also agreed to purchase 50 Boeing aircraft and expand imports of U.S. energy and agricultural products. These actions demonstrate how Jakarta utilises trade policy adjustments to mitigate tensions and secure continued access to the U.S. market.

Issue-specific pushback but no systemic rupture

While trade is the primary point of friction, U.S.–Indonesia relations have demonstrated both continuity and selective adjustment in other areas, thereby avoiding a comprehensive breakdown. In defence and security, Indonesia and the U.S. elevated their relationship to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in November 2023, signalling deeper cooperation.

The two sides continue to collaborate through programs under USAID and broader development assistance frameworks. On issues such as maritime security, counter-terrorism, and regional order, Indonesia has maintained close working relations with the U.S. and its allied partners, often emphasising shared strategic interests. Interviewees described Washington as “pragmatic” in distinguishing Indonesia’s BRICS membership from its security role.

Following the July 2025 trade agreement, U.S. public statements became more moderate. Trump’s broad tariff threat was narrowed to apply only to countries explicitly supporting anti-U.S. policies. Thus, the U.S. response remains issue-specific, applying pressure on trade and financial matters while avoiding escalation into a broader strategic rupture, at least for now.

Diplomatic rhetorical divergence and reputation signalling

Another outcome is a widening rhetorical gap between Jakarta and Washington, particularly in global governance discussions, alongside Indonesia’s efforts to manage its international reputation.

At BRICS summits, Indonesia has joined calls to reform the IMF–World Bank system, advocating debt restructuring, more equitable governance, and stronger representation for the Global South.

In public diplomacy, Jakarta frames its BRICS membership as “promoting inclusive global governance, climate justice, and South–South cooperation,” language that is reformist rather than overtly anti-Western.

To maintain trust with Western partners, Indonesia emphasises its commitment to democratic values, human rights, and continued engagement in multilateral institutions based on shared norms. Interviewees noted that a small group of officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Kemlu) actively engages Western think tanks to clarify Jakarta's position.

In several Western capitals, however, some observers remain cautious about Indonesia's intentions. Analysts interpret its BRICS engagement as either a tilt toward China or a gradual distancing from liberal international norms. Thus, Indonesia seeks rhetorical balance by emphasising Global South narratives in multilateral settings while maintaining reassurance in bilateral diplomacy.

Stress Points, Constraints, and Adaptive Responses

Structural Constraints: Asymmetric Dependencies and Negotiating Capacity

Indonesia's diplomatic flexibility is constrained by several structural pressures that limit how far it can pursue BRICS integration without triggering backlash. Indonesia remains heavily dependent on Western markets, particularly the United States and the European Union. In 2023–2024, the U.S. accounted for approximately 9–10% of Indonesia's total export volume.

Domestic infrastructure and capital requirements also compel Indonesia to maintain openness to Western investment and financing. Excessive reliance on BRICS-led institutions could increase exposure to China-led financial influence. Within BRICS institutions, power asymmetries, particularly the influence of China and India, may limit Indonesia's ability to shape agendas. Some analysts caution that Indonesia risks becoming a junior partner, adapting to dominant members' priorities.

Policymakers also indicate constraints in negotiating capacity, including limited human resources and diplomatic bandwidth. Fully binding commitments, such as those related to currency reform or contingency financing mechanisms within BRICS, require technical expertise that is still being developed. Given these constraints, Jakarta often adopts incrementalism, preferring limited, reversible commitments over bold structural shifts, especially in politically sensitive domains.

Domestic political risk and reputational pressure

Domestically, Indonesia's engagement with BRICS presents political and reputational risks. Critics in parliament and the media argue that BRICS membership could weaken Indonesia's "*Bebas-Aktif*" (free and active) non-alignment doctrine or expose the country to external influence.

The perception of BRICS as "anti-Western" or aligned with authoritarian blocs creates political optics challenges, particularly for opposition groups. Interviewees emphasise the importance of carefully managing foreign policy messaging for domestic audiences.

Some bureaucratic actors also remain cautious. Economic ministries, trade agencies, and financial regulators tend to be more conservative than the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in supporting high-risk international initiatives. This interagency friction further constrains Indonesia's most ambitious BRICS objectives. As a result, foreign policy implementation remains incremental and path-dependent, shaped strongly by domestic political considerations.

Pushback triggers: financial architecture and currency alternatives

While many BRICS initiatives are relatively low-risk, certain high-sensitivity proposals could provoke strong reactions from Washington and its allies. The primary concerns involve monetary reform and alternative payment systems. Interviews and policy documents indicate that Indonesian officials are cautious about fully endorsing BRICS mechanisms that could challenge the dominance of the U.S. dollar. They fear such steps could trigger financial retaliation.

If Indonesia were to support a BRICS-wide digital currency, cross-border settlement system, or accelerated de-dollarisation agenda, the U.S. Treasury and Federal Reserve could respond with measures including sanctions or restricted access to dollar-based transactions. Indeed, U.S. rhetoric already signals potential punitive action: Trump stated that countries supporting anti-American BRICS policies could face an additional 10% tariff.

To manage these risks, Jakarta has positioned de-dollarisation as a long-term aspiration

rather than an immediate policy objective. Thus, the main pressure points remain concentrated in monetary and financial domains, areas requiring careful calibration.

Adaptive responses: conditional opt-outs and diplomatic backtracking

In response to external pressure, Indonesia has adopted adaptive strategies such as delaying commitments, introducing opt-out clauses, or recalibrating participation. In trade negotiations, prior to the U.S. agreement, Indonesia proactively reduced tariff risks by offering trade concessions and purchase commitments, including the \$34 billion package.

Jakarta has also inserted non-binding language into BRICS discussions, particularly in financial cooperation initiatives (e.g., "pilot or voluntary participation status"). Interviews confirm that senior diplomats deliberately shaped such formulations to avoid legal or political lock-in. Under heightened pressure, Indonesia has considered delaying participation in controversial BRICS initiatives. One scenario discussed in interviews involved postponing support for a BRICS reserve currency until clearer assessments of U.S. responses were available.

Some interviewees also described contingency arrangements in which Indonesia would reduce its visibility in sensitive BRICS committees by delegating roles to other members, thereby limiting exposure during periods of heightened tension. These adaptive strategies indicate that Indonesia is not merely reactive but actively designing flexible pathways within its multilateral commitments.

Early signs of convergence and downstream institutional synergies

Despite existing tensions, there are early signs of convergence in selected policy areas that may align BRICS and Western interests. In climate policy, energy transition, and green finance, Indonesia has identified overlapping priorities. Within BRICS discussions, Jakarta promotes renewable energy development, carbon markets, and climate adaptation financing, areas broadly compatible with Western agendas.

In critical minerals and supply chains, particularly nickel and copper, Indonesia positions itself as a bridge between Chinese and U.S. green technology ecosystems. Some interviewees noted cautious interest from U.S. counterparts in cooperation on supply chain resilience and energy transition materials.

Jakarta has also proposed exploratory frameworks for multi-bloc cooperation, such as Indonesia–U.S.–BRICS collaboration on digital infrastructure and AI governance, aiming to reduce zero-sum framing. Although still conceptual, these initiatives seek to build functional overlap between competing blocs.

Following the 2025 BRICS summit, Indonesia called for restraint on protectionism, greater economic openness, and rule-based trade governance, even as Washington criticised certain BRICS positions. This rhetorical convergence provides limited but meaningful diplomatic space for engagement. Thus, while tensions persist, Indonesia continues to pursue areas of pragmatic convergence to bridge competing geopolitical frameworks.

Summary of Key Findings (Relating to Hypotheses)

The findings generally support the proposed hypotheses. H1 is strongly supported, as Indonesia continues to employ hedging as its primary diplomatic strategy while becoming more assertive and adaptive following its BRICS membership. H2 is also supported, with tensions with the United States remaining moderate and issue-specific, particularly in trade and currency, rather than escalating into a broader strategic confrontation. H3 is confirmed, as Indonesia's institutional constraints—including limited capacity, domestic political considerations, and external economic dependencies—continue to restrict its engagement in high-risk BRICS initiatives. Finally, H4 shows early evidence, indicating that Indonesia is gradually shifting from a multi-alignment approach toward more selective alignment by participating in lower-risk BRICS initiatives while preserving its strategic autonomy.

Overall, Indonesia's multi-alignment model is evolving, rather than collapsing. The findings suggest Jakarta is moving toward a "flexible strategic alignment," not completely non-aligned, but not fully committed to a single bloc, either.

These empirical results provide a strong basis for ongoing discussion of how Indonesia's

diplomatic behaviours can shift under greater pressure, revived U.S. influence, or due to internal pressures. In the following chapter, the description will situate these findings within the theoretical context and suggest more nuanced models of middle-power diplomacy in a fragmented global world.

Discussion

Hedging, but Done Selectively

Classic Southeast Asian hedging involves fostering balanced relationships and maintaining options. The research indicates that this tradition is not extinct, but it is accompanied by selective calibration. Indonesia's accession to the NDB in March 2025 demonstrates how BRICS expands financial space for energy transition and infrastructure without pushing Jakarta into a revisionist financial order. Indonesian policymakers positioned participation in the NDB as supporting "economic transformation" rather than signaling departure from the Bretton Woods system. This represents a hedging strategy: pursuing pragmatic benefits while minimizing signals that might upset the U.S. and its allies. In this context, the July 2025 U.S.–Indonesia agreement—which reduced threatened blanket tariffs from 32% to 19%—and Jakarta's commitment to further market opening for American products demonstrate the reassurance dimension of hedging.

Where Indonesia's BRICS participation is a source of U.S. concern, it simultaneously ensures continued access to trade and strategic imports, such as aircraft, thereby reducing friction in the broader relationship. This reflects what can be described as "hedging 2.0": gaining advantages in one domain (access to the NDB) while accepting costs in another (tariff concessions). In pragmatic terms, Jakarta's repeated assertion that "BRICS is complementary, not antagonistic" functions as a reassurance strategy.

It is a stock phrase designed to signal to Western partners that Indonesia remains committed to its *Bebas-Aktif* (independent and active) diplomacy. Public statements by senior officials in January 2025 emphasized that BRICS membership "is not a deviation," reinforcing a positive interpretation of Indonesia's foreign policy posture. This matters because it reshapes perceptions of BRICS membership: it is framed as an instrument for economic growth and expanded financing access, not as a challenge to prevailing geopolitical norms. The findings reveal a clear pattern of issue-based compartmentalization.

Jakarta is more likely to collaborate on "low-risk" BRICS agendas such as development and climate, while avoiding or downplaying "high-risk" issues, including de-dollarization and coercive industrial policy. This is not random; it reflects responses to July 2025 U.S. signals, which threatened a 10% tariff on members engaging in "anti-American" measures within BRICS. The U.S. further clarified that tariffs would be imposed only in response to specific actions, enabling Indonesia to frame its engagement as technical rather than ideological. This compartmentalization aligns with Indonesia's dependence on U.S. market access and global financial infrastructure.

By framing monetary reform proposals as aspirational and prioritizing financeable projects through the NDB, Jakarta reduces its exposure to sanctions. In practice, Indonesian leaders actively manage sensitive issues in U.S.–Indonesia negotiations by downplaying contentious initiatives while emphasizing cooperative agendas, such as trade normalization, to preserve stability. The July 2025 agreements, which involved potential deals worth \$34 billion in U.S.-linked transactions prior to the negotiation deadline, illustrate Indonesia's use of proactive concessions to avoid punitive outcomes.

Overall, Jakarta's discourse management maintains a stable balance: BRICS is discussed in low-risk contexts (such as climate and health), while high-risk issues are kept deliberately ambiguous. This nuanced linguistic control is characteristic of Southeast Asian hedging, where framing in press releases and joint statements becomes an instrument of economic and diplomatic strategy.

Why did trade, rather than defense, become the primary source of friction? The findings suggest that the U.S. targeted domains where it has direct, legally enforceable leverage, such as tariffs, while avoiding broader strategic escalation. The details of the July 2025 agreement, reducing threatened tariffs to 19% and Indonesia eliminating tariffs on over 99% of U.S. goods,

illustrate how targeted coercion produces negotiated concessions. Indonesia's response is rational: the U.S. remains a critical export market and a rule-setting actor in key growth sectors such as aviation and agricultural technology.

Two bargaining dynamics emerge. First, asymmetry of salience: for Washington, tariffs are a low-cost, high-visibility tool for domestic signaling; for Jakarta, they pose direct risks to growth and investor confidence. Second, convertibility: Indonesia can translate tariff relief into tangible economic gains, such as improved market sentiment and currency stability, whereas symbolic gains within BRICS currency debates yield limited immediate benefit and carry higher retaliation risk. As a result, trade concessions were prioritized while sensitive financial experimentation within BRICS was deprioritized.

Crucially, U.S. warnings regarding "anti-American" policies were conditional. The threats applied only to specific actions, creating room for Indonesia to compartmentalize its strategy. As long as Indonesia emphasizes NDB financing and development-oriented cooperation while avoiding endorsement of coercive financial structures, tensions remain manageable.

Indonesia's attempt to engage both BRICS and Western partners through ASEAN-centered mechanisms reflects an omni-enmeshment strategy. ASEAN's consensus-based diplomacy helps de-escalate tensions by channeling disputes into formal, low-intensity dialogue. Indonesia benefits by enabling "ASEAN-plus-BRICS" engagement formats, balancing BRICS' perceived anti-Western framing through inclusive regional discussion.

This indicates that Indonesia is not only balancing external partners but also navigating competing institutional narratives. It leverages ASEAN diplomatic norms to legitimize BRICS participation within a broader regional architecture. This non-confrontational, process-oriented approach reduces reputational costs for Western partners and sustains continued cooperation with Jakarta despite tariff tensions. Ongoing U.S.-Indonesia collaboration in defense and maritime domains after the agreement further reinforces this: compartmentalized tensions have not escalated into systemic conflict.

The findings also point to a cautious domestic policy environment. Ministries involved in trade and regulation tend to be risk-averse, with critics warning against undermining Indonesia's *Bebas-Aktif* doctrine. From a policy standpoint, this creates internal constraints that favor incremental, low-risk commitments. When officials anticipate strong U.S. backlash, particularly on currency-related issues, they tend to adopt vague language or delay decisions. This protective framing is a rational adaptation for a middle power with limited bargaining leverage.

This explains the consistent emphasis on complementarity and continuity in official communication. External reassurance simultaneously strengthens domestic legitimacy: it signals to citizens that sovereignty, understood through *Bebas-Aktif* autonomy, remains intact even as Indonesia deepens engagement in new multilateral platforms. The January 2025 messaging that BRICS membership does not alter Indonesia's foreign policy orientation serves both international and domestic functions.

From the U.S. perspective, responses appear calibrated and issue-specific. In July 2025, signals ranging from proposed 10% tariffs to clarifications that penalties would depend on specific "anti-American" actions culminated in a negotiated tariff ceiling of 19% for Indonesia. This reflects a containment strategy without rupture: pressure is applied in areas of leverage (trade), while avoiding escalation into security or development domains where cooperation remains mutually beneficial.

This approach is consistent with broader U.S. engagement patterns in Southeast Asia, which allow limited strategic pluralism as long as partners do not endorse systems that undermine U.S. financial primacy. Indonesia's emphasis on NDB financing and its downplaying of currency reform agendas reflect awareness of these constraints, as also evident in its public diplomacy.

The results indicate a gradual shift from traditional hedging toward selective alignment, particularly in areas that directly support Indonesia's development priorities, such as energy transition and infrastructure. Three conditions shape this shift: 1) Material outcomes: Projects with direct domestic payoff, such as financeable infrastructure through the NDB or supply-chain stability, are prioritized. 2) Low sanction risk: Preferred initiatives avoid triggering immediate U.S. trade or financial retaliation, particularly in climate or health cooperation. The July experience

clarified these boundaries. 3) Compatible narratives: Initiatives framed in inclusive and rules-based language (e.g., “open supply chains” or “just energy transition”) are more easily accepted by Western partners, reinforcing Indonesia’s diplomatic credibility. Public messaging around the 2025 BRICS summit reflected these themes.

Indonesia also avoids deeper engagement in BRICS initiatives that would (a) require binding financial commitments, (b) complicate defense relations with the U.S. and its allies, or (c) weaken ASEAN centrality. These constraints are both conceptual and institutional: by keeping sensitive issues at the level of exploratory discourse, Jakarta preserves strategic flexibility.

Three policy recommendations arise from this analysis

Indonesia needs to institutionalize its compartmentalization strategy first. To hedge effectively, inter-ministerial discussions are necessary in any BRICS initiative that may cross U.S. red lines (e.g., financial agreements or export controls). This needs to consider the risk of sanctions, opportunity costs, and whether the initiative can be framed within existing rules and ASEAN principles. The July 2025 situation demonstrates how such high-pressure scenarios requiring rushed compromises can be avoided by committing to structured review processes.

Second, Indonesia must develop NDB-aligned projects that connect with global public goods. Areas such as climate adaptation, fair energy transition, and critical minerals supply chains offer potential synergies between BRICS and the West. Indonesia can utilize NDB financing to attract additional funding from the U.S., EU, Japan, or private investors by positioning itself as a bridge-builder rather than merely choosing between one bloc and the other. This strategy establishes a record of BRICS projects that are palatable or even useful to Western actors.

Third, Indonesia must expand ASEAN-centric forums to normalize interaction among different blocs. “ASEAN–BRICS” sideline talks should become a routine practice, focusing on standards, connectivity, and digital trust. By integrating BRICS discussions into the collaborative environment of ASEAN, Indonesia mitigates the perceived threat associated with its membership in BRICS. It reinforces a regional communication pattern that prioritizes de-escalation and collaborative processes. This strategic communication effectively manages great power rivalries within multilateral discussions.

The Indonesian case enhances hedging theory by emphasizing the performative and linguistic aspects of statecraft: 1) Performative reassurance: Repeated official phrases, such as “not a deviation” or “complementary,” serve as strategic speech acts that shape perceptions of alignment and influence counterpart reactions. The measured U.S. approach in July suggests that this kind of messaging is effective when supported by material compromises. 2) Textual opt-outs: Careful drafting choices, such as non-binding agreements or review clauses, transform potentially contentious proposals into manageable ones. 3) Moving between registers: Indonesia alternates between technical terms (such as NDB financing) and broader ideas (such as Global South representation), allowing it to communicate effectively with diverse audiences and sustain multiple alignments.

Thus, the concept of “performative multi-alignment” captures this blend of practical hedging and communication strategies; states not only diversify their partnerships but also showcase this diversification through deliberate speech and textual choices, thereby managing the risks of sanctions and reputational impacts.

While the current stability appears workable, three risks remain. First, a macroeconomic or financial shock could occur. If BRICS establishes a viable alternative financial system, the U.S. might escalate beyond tariffs to financial restrictions, putting Indonesia’s current balancing act at risk. Jakarta’s caution is understandable, but pressure from within BRICS or external crises (such as sanctions against a member state) could shorten decision-making time.

Second, domestic politicization poses a threat. A rise in nationalist rhetoric, either advocating closer BRICS ties or rejecting them, could limit the government’s ability to negotiate. To counter this, Jakarta must continue to highlight the developmental benefits of NDB-aligned projects while maintaining ties to its *Bebas-Aktif* principle.

Third, U.S. policy inconsistency is a concern. The events of July 2025 illustrated that U.S. approaches can fluctuate between threats and clarifications, ultimately leading to agreements. A

future shift toward broad tariffs could challenge Indonesia's balancing strategy, forcing sharper decisions. The lesson from July is to capitalize on positive momentum while conditions are stable: secure diversified market access and formally establish de-escalation mechanisms (such as tariff-review clauses tied to specific policy triggers).

Reviewing the evidence from 2025, Indonesia's diplomacy following its BRICS membership reflects the core hypotheses, but with a clearer understanding of the mechanisms involved. The country is not simply aligning itself; it is actively practicing multi-alignment (sequencing initiatives, discourse styles, and engagement forums to expand benefits while mitigating penalties). The NDB decision broadens financial opportunities without crossing U.S. restrictions; the July tariff agreement illustrates how compromises can maintain access while preventing major disruptions, and ASEAN's communication style serves as a foundation for normalizing interactions across different blocs. If Indonesia continues this adaptive and flexible approach, enhanced by formal reviews of sensitive initiatives, it can retain BRICS advantages while managing its relationships with the United States and its allies in a divided global context.

Key sources referenced in this chapter include Reuters reports regarding Indonesia's BRICS membership, NDB participation, tariff threats, and settlements from January to July 2025. These sources ground the analysis of hedging, compartmentalization, and calibrated responses from the U.S.

CONCLUSION

This study is subject to several limitations that warrant acknowledgement. The analysis beyond 2025 relies on projective reasoning rather than empirical observation, and the single-case design limits generalizability. The performative multi-alignment framework, while analytically productive, requires further testing across different middle powers to establish its broader applicability. Furthermore, claims regarding ASEAN's "shock absorber" role should be treated as context-specific observations rather than generalizable propositions, as ASEAN's mediating capacity depends on the specific issue area and the intensity of great-power competition involved. Future research should pursue three avenues: (1) comparative analysis of other new BRICS members' diplomatic adjustments to test the generalizability of the performative multi-alignment framework; (2) longitudinal tracking of Indonesia's BRICS engagement to assess whether selective alignment intensifies or stabilizes over time; and (3) quantitative analysis of trade and investment flow data to complement the qualitative findings presented here.

This study analyzed how Indonesian diplomacy changed following BRICS membership in 2025 and what it means for its alliance with the United States and its allies. The evidence shows a change, not a rupture. Jakarta pursues an elite, performative diplomacy to balance its relationships and remain loyal to the spirit of being free and active, while adapting its tools to the fragmented world order. The availability of the New Development Bank, with its focus on energy transition and infrastructure finance, expands Indonesia's development opportunities. However, these strategies are accompanied by reassurances to long-standing partners, especially in times of tension. The mid-2025 tariff situation highlighted this duality. Indonesia made significant market-opening commitments to ease punitive threats while asserting that its participation in BRICS complements its existing agreements. Essentially, the country expands its material options in one area while providing assurances in another, communicating this balance through carefully chosen public statements.

Risk management relies on careful compartmentalization. Indonesia views BRICS initiatives as issue-specific, advancing projects in development, climate, public health, and selected supply chains that are financially viable and less likely to trigger sanctions. At the same time, it delays or softens high-stakes monetary proposals, such as de-dollarization and common currency experiments. This approach reflects uneven dependence and sensitivity to U.S. market access and dollar-based infrastructures. By prioritizing NDB-style projects and downplaying macro-financial revisions, Jakarta reduces the risk of sanctions and retains flexibility. Equally important is how officials present this cooperation. They frequently describe BRICS collaboration in technical, problem-focused terms, reserving ideological language for broader issues such as global governance reform, climate justice, and South-South cooperation, which signals commitment to a rules-based system. Language such as "complementary," "open, rules-based,"

and “free and active” helps stabilize expectations and reduces the likelihood of friction escalating into strategic mistrust.

Frictions with the United States have emerged but remain controlled. Trade is the most heated area, as it brings together American pressure tactics and Indonesian sensitivities. In mid-2025, the threat of blanket tariffs was partially lifted in exchange for tariff reductions, the removal of non-tariff barriers, and significant purchase commitments. This shows how specific pressures often lead to negotiated settlements. Notably, the impact on defense cooperation, maritime coordination, and political ties remained limited. This pattern aligns with a U.S. approach of calibrated containment and an Indonesian strategy focused on proactive accommodation. ASEAN acts as a shock absorber for structural shocks. By integrating its new BRICS identity into ASEAN’s consensus-based framework, Jakarta minimizes zero-sum interpretations of policy and channels rivalry into routine discussions and technical collaboration, thereby reducing face-threatening dynamics. Choosing the right forums becomes a method of de-escalation and reputational management, helping Indonesia maintain its regional leadership claim while normalizing interactions across blocs.

These dynamics clarify both strengths and limitations. Multi-alignment is feasible if Indonesia establishes inter-ministerial checkpoints for sensitive initiatives, maintains focused BRICS engagement on development, and continues cooperation with Western partners through ASEAN-based processes. Stability could decline if financial alternatives shift from discussion to implementation or if U.S. policy moves toward harsher, more coercive measures that reduce maneuverability. Domestic politics could also constrain flexibility. Policy practices should transform habits into standards, including opt-outs, sunset reviews, and clear triggers for risky commitments. This can be achieved through expanded NDB projects that attract Western financing for climate and critical minerals, as well as ASEAN–BRICS dialogues that normalize collaborative problem-solving. The overall goal is to enhance communication. Effective textual strategies and careful wording serve as safety valves. In summary, Indonesia’s membership in BRICS has altered its diplomatic interactions while preserving its identity, aligning its practices to achieve development benefits and maintain strategic trust.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Author 1 conceptualized the study, collected and analyzed the data, conducted the literature review, and prepared the initial manuscript draft. Author 2 contributed to the research design, data interpretation, and critical revision of the manuscript. Author 3 supervised the overall research process, validated the theoretical framework and findings, and finalized the manuscript for publication. All authors reviewed, approved, and agreed to the final version of the manuscript.

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