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Strengthening Multilateralism: Survival Amid Global Turbulence and a Fragmented World

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Opening Remarks Strengthening Multilateralism: Survival Amid Global Turbulence and a Fragmented World

T.B. Ace Hasan Syadzily
Governor of The National Resilience Institute of The Republic of Indonesia

Opening Remarks

With gratitude, I welcome the holding of the Jakarta Geopolitical Forum X 2026, which carries the theme Strengthening Multilateralism: Survival Amid Global Turbulence and a Fragmented World. This forum serves as an important platform for thinkers, practitioners, and world leaders to discuss increasingly complex geopolitical challenges, as well as to find joint solutions in strengthening multilateralism.

Today, the world faces global turbulence marked by political fragmentation, economic rivalry, and security uncertainty. In such a situation, multilateralism is not just a choice, but an urgent necessity to ensure the continuity of peace, stability, and human welfare. Indonesia, through Lemhannas RI, is committed to continuing to play an active role in promoting inclusive, fair, and sustainable international cooperation.

This forum is expected to enrich strategic perspectives, strengthen international networks, and generate innovative ideas that are relevant to global dynamics. I believe that through open dialogue and constructive collaboration, we can find a way out of fragmentation towards a more harmonious world order.

Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to the team who has contributed to the organization of this forum. Hopefully, the Proceeding of the Jakarta Geopolitical Forum X 2026 will become an important reference towards the milestone in strengthening multilateralism amid the world's turbulence.

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Keynote Address Strengthening Multilateralism: Survival Amid Global Turbulence and a Fragmented World

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H. E. Sugiono

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Keynote Address

The international system is experiencing growing pressures arising from geopolitical rivalry, armed conflicts, economic protectionism, climate change, and rapid technological transformation. These interconnected developments have weakened confidence in multilateral institutions while exposing inconsistencies in the implementation of international law. The increasing complexity of transnational challenges demonstrates that multilateral cooperation remains indispensable, although international institutions require reform to become more representative, adaptive, and capable of responding effectively to evolving global realities.

Indonesia continues to uphold its Bebas Aktif foreign policy as the fundamental framework guiding its international engagement. This principle does not represent neutrality or passive diplomacy but reflects Indonesia's sovereign authority to determine its own foreign policy while actively contributing to international peace, safeguarding national sovereignty, promoting national prosperity, and maintaining constructive relations with all partners without joining exclusive geopolitical blocs. Expanding strategic options while preserving national interests therefore remains the central orientation of Indonesia's diplomacy.

Strengthening multilateralism requires improving existing international institutions rather than abandoning them. Indonesia consequently supports initiatives to enhance the effectiveness, inclusiveness, transparency, and accountability of global governance through the UN80 Initiative, reform of the United Nations Security Council, and stronger representation of developing countries in international decision making. These reforms are expected to reinforce collective responses to increasingly interconnected global challenges while preserving a rules-based international order.

Indonesia also continues to expand its strategic engagement through active participation in ASEAN, the G20, BRICS, the D-8, and the OECD accession process. These complementary engagements broaden Indonesia's diplomatic space, strengthen international partnerships, and preserve strategic flexibility without shifting from one geopolitical bloc to another. This approach reflects the practical implementation of the *Bebas Aktif* principle in navigating an increasingly dynamic international environment.

Strong diplomacy depends upon strong national resilience. Food security, energy security, industrial downstreaming, technological capability, human capital development, economic governance, and trade diversification constitute mutually reinforcing priorities supporting Indonesia's long-term national transformation. Strengthening these domestic foundations enhances Indonesia's capacity to protect national interests while contributing to regional stability, sustainable development, and international cooperation.

Multilateralism therefore remains indispensable despite increasing global fragmentation. Maintaining an effective international order requires continuous institutional reform to ensure that global governance remains relevant, inclusive, and responsive to contemporary challenges. Through the integration of comprehensive national resilience and the *Bebas Aktif* foreign policy, Indonesia will continue to preserve its strategic autonomy, expand international cooperation, and contribute to a peaceful, stable, and rules-based international order.

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1st Plenary Session

The Decline of Multilateralism in the Multipolar Era: Super Power Dominance and Challenges to International Norms

Moderator
Dr. Philips J. Vermonte
Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences
Indonesian International Islamic University (UIII)

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Beyond Great Powers: Middle Powers and the Future of Multilateral Cooperation

Nick Bisley
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Abstract

This conference paper presents an academic adaptation of Professor Nick Bisley's presentation at the Jakarta Geopolitical Forum X, examining the evolving role of middle powers in sustaining multilateral cooperation amid increasing geopolitical uncertainty. The presentation explains that the post-Cold War environment, characterised by strategic stability, revitalised multilateralism, and economic openness, has shifted towards intensified great-power competition, institutional fragmentation, and a more politicised global economy. In response, middle powers increasingly rely on both multilateral and minilateral cooperation, although arrangements including the Quad and AUKUS have yet to demonstrate consistent effectiveness. The presentation further argues that effective cooperation depends on clearly defined shared interests, sustained leadership, and tangible outcomes rather than the expansion of institutional mechanisms. The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) demonstrates the capacity of middle powers to achieve meaningful cooperation through pragmatic leadership and long-term commitment. The presentation concludes by identifying maritime security, domestic security infrastructure, and economic resilience as practical priorities through which middle powers can strengthen international cooperation and contribute to regional and global stability despite their structural limitations.

Keywords: CPTPP, Economic Resilience, Middle Powers, Minilateralism, Multilateral Cooperation

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Introduction

The contemporary strategic environment differs fundamentally from that which emerged following the end of the Cold War. During the early 1990s, international stability was underpinned by American primacy, the revitalisation of multilateral institutions at both the global and regional levels, and widespread confidence in the benefits of economic openness. Institutions including the United Nations expanded their roles, while ASEAN-centred mechanisms, namely the ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus, and the East Asia Summit, reinforced regional multilateral cooperation. The presentation argues that these conditions have changed substantially.

The contemporary international order is increasingly characterised by renewed great-power competition, mounting pressure on multilateral institutions, and a global economic system that has become more closely intertwined with geopolitical rivalry. States are reshaping economic policies to protect strategic interests and strengthen domestic industries, while the leadership traditionally exercised by major powers has become less predictable. These developments have created a considerably more challenging strategic environment for middle powers than that experienced during the post-Cold War period.

Against this background, the presentation examined how middle powers can respond to a more contested, uncertain, and strategically complex international environment. Middle powers were described as states capable of influencing elements of the international order but lacking sufficient capacity to determine global rules or advance national interests independently. This structural reality reinforces the continuing importance of international cooperation and the need to adapt multilateral approaches to address evolving geopolitical challenges more effectively.

Result and Discussion

The presentation explained that the strategic environment confronting middle powers has changed fundamentally. One important response has been the growing reliance on minilateral cooperation through small, focused, and results-oriented arrangements, including the Quad and AUKUS. These mechanisms bring together a limited number of countries pursuing specific strategic objectives when multilateral institutions are perceived as unable to deliver effective outcomes or when participating states face common strategic concerns. Although minilateral initiatives have expanded considerably, their practical effectiveness remains uncertain. The Quad, for example, has established numerous leader-level initiatives covering cybersecurity, climate change, critical technologies, space cooperation, and health security. Nevertheless, the presentation argued that tangible policy outcomes remain relatively limited, indicating that minilateral cooperation has not yet demonstrated the capacity to replace broader multilateral arrangements.

The discussion further emphasised that the shortcomings of multilateralism cannot be explained solely by renewed great-power rivalry. Several multilateral institutions established during the 1990s and early 2000s have also encountered internal challenges relating to leadership, sustained investment, and implementation capacity. The ASEAN Regional Forum was presented as an example whose limited effectiveness reflects not only strategic competition among major powers but also institutional weaknesses that have constrained the delivery of practical outcomes.

Within Asia, two distinct yet parallel models of regional cooperation were identified. The first consists of long-established cooperative and inclusive institutions centred on ASEAN, which encourage participation by all states willing to observe commonly accepted rules. The second consists of cooperative arrangements that are simultaneously competitive and exclusive. Frameworks including the Quad and AUKUS were presented as mechanisms designed to strengthen the strategic position of participating members within an increasingly contested geopolitical environment rather than as open regional institutions. The coexistence of these two models illustrates the increasingly complex architecture of regional cooperation.

To strengthen cooperation under these conditions, the presentation identified three essential requirements. First, successful cooperation must be based upon clearly defined shared interests. Earlier initiatives among middle powers, including MIKTA, demonstrated that institutional arrangements are unlikely to achieve meaningful progress without a common understanding of collective objectives. Second, effective cooperation requires leadership that is clear, consistent, and sustained over time. Third, cooperative arrangements must produce tangible outcomes. The discussion noted that one source of growing dissatisfaction with multilateralism has been the proliferation of institutional mechanisms without corresponding implementation. Greater emphasis should therefore be placed on improving the performance of existing institutions rather than continually establishing new ones.

The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) was presented as an example of successful middle-power leadership. Following the withdrawal of the United States from the original Trans-Pacific Partnership in 2017, many observers expected the agreement to fail. However, continued leadership by Japan, Australia, and other participating economies enabled the agreement to proceed successfully. The CPTPP was therefore presented as evidence that middle powers remain capable of delivering effective large-scale cooperation when supported by sustained political commitment and practical implementation.

The presentation also examined the contribution of Track Two diplomacy to multilateral cooperation. Informal dialogue involving academics, experts, and officials participating in their personal capacities provides opportunities to discuss sensitive issues openly and develop practical policy options. However, many existing Track Two mechanisms have increasingly evolved into Track 1.5 processes in which official government positions dominate discussions. Strengthening genuinely independent policy dialogue while improving its connection with policymaking was therefore identified as an important priority.

Finally, the presentation argued that middle powers should adopt realistic expectations regarding the role of multilateral cooperation. Rather than attempting to redesign the international order, greater attention should be directed towards pragmatic coalition-building capable of delivering international public goods in specific policy areas. Three priorities were highlighted. The first concerns maritime security, including both the protection of sea lines of communication and responses to non-traditional maritime challenges i.e. illegal fishing and marine pollution. The second involves strengthening domestic security infrastructure by enhancing cybersecurity, diversifying supply chains, and reducing vulnerabilities associated with an increasingly contested international environment. The third focuses on economic resilience through greater diversification of markets, resources, and supply networks. The presentation illustrated this principle through the observation that diversification strengthens resilience by reducing dependence on any single source of supply, an approach considered increasingly important within a highly politicised global economy.

Conclusion

The presentation concluded by reaffirming that middle powers cannot balance great powers collectively, nor can they fundamentally reshape the international order. Nevertheless, they remain capable of making meaningful contributions within specific areas of international cooperation. Achieving this objective requires flexibility, realistic expectations, sustained leadership, and a willingness to undertake difficult and long-term commitments. Rather than pursuing comprehensive redesigns of global governance, middle powers should concentrate on pragmatic cooperation that produces tangible outcomes and delivers international public goods. By strengthening cooperation in maritime security, domestic security infrastructure, and economic resilience, middle powers can expand their capacity to respond to geopolitical uncertainty while preserving strategic autonomy. Although the challenges ahead are substantial, the presentation emphasised that practical cooperation must begin now if middle powers are to remain effective contributors to a more stable and resilient international order.

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Navigating Peace and Stability in The Dominance of Major Global Powers in Interstate Competition

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Abstract

This conference paper presents an academic adaptation of Professor Georgy Toloraya's presentation at the Jakarta Geopolitical Forum X, examining the implications of an emerging multipolar international order through the concept of Comparative Power. The presentation argues that conventional measures of state power based primarily on economic or military capabilities are insufficient to explain the increasingly complex distribution of influence in contemporary international relations. Instead, a broader comparative framework is introduced, incorporating historical, institutional, political, cultural, technological, and strategic dimensions to classify states according to their functional roles within the international system. The presentation further examines Russia's strategic position as a sub-superpower, the significance of the Russia-China partnership, the complementary role of BRICS+, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, and the Eurasian Economic Union alongside the United Nations, and the growing importance of Southeast Asia, particularly Indonesia, in supporting a more inclusive multipolar order. Practical opportunities for cooperation are identified in energy security, food security, defence technology, peaceful nuclear applications, digital innovation, education, and multilateral dialogue. The presentation concludes that multipolarity represents an emerging equilibrium that should be strengthened through inclusive cooperation, strategic partnerships, and pragmatic multilateral engagement.

Keywords: BRICS+, Comparative Power, Indonesia, Multipolarity, Russia-Southeast Asia Relations

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Introduction

The contemporary international order has undergone profound transformation since the end of the Cold War. Assumptions of a stable international system centred upon a limited number of dominant powers have gradually given way to a more fragmented geopolitical landscape characterised by shifting strategic alignments, emerging centres of influence, and increasing institutional pluralism. These developments have altered the position of many states, including Indonesia, whose accession to BRICS reflects its growing role within global governance and the wider international system.

These developments also call into question conventional approaches to measuring state power. Traditional classifications generally rely on economic size, military capability, or political influence as the principal indicators of international status. However, these measures are becoming increasingly inadequate for explaining the diverse roles assumed by states within an evolving multipolar order. The presentation therefore introduced the concept of Comparative Power, which evaluates states through a broader combination of political, economic, military, historical, institutional, cultural, technological, and strategic dimensions. This framework provides a more comprehensive basis for understanding how states influence the international system beyond conventional measures of national capability.

Building upon this perspective, the presentation proposed a comparative taxonomy of state power to explain the different functions performed by countries within the emerging international order. The framework serves as the foundation for examining Russia's strategic position, the development of the Russia-China partnership, the contribution of non-Western multilateral institutions, and the expanding opportunities for cooperation between Russia and Southeast Asia, particularly Indonesia, within an increasingly multipolar world.

Result and Discussion

The proposed Comparative Power framework provides an alternative perspective for understanding the contemporary international order by moving beyond conventional classifications based solely on economic size, military capability, or political influence. Instead, it evaluates states through a broader combination of historical, institutional, political, cultural, technological, and strategic factors, recognising that international influence is increasingly determined by a state's functional role within a multipolar system rather than by material capability alone.

Based on this framework, the presentation classified the international hierarchy into several categories of comparative power. At the highest level are the System Architects, represented by the United States and China, which possess comprehensive capabilities enabling them to shape international rules, influence global governance, and determine the strategic direction of the international system. The second tier comprises Sub-superpowers, represented primarily by Russia and, potentially, India. These states possess sufficient strategic capability to influence the balance among major powers, exercise significant geopolitical leverage, and affect international outcomes, although they do not independently establish the rules governing the international order.

The next level consists of Great Powers, including countries whose influence derives from a combination of political authority, economic capability, military strength, historical legacy, institutional position, and soft power. Beyond this group, the presentation introduced the category of Upper-middle Powers, describing states that function as regional anchors, geopolitical stabilisers, or asymmetric strategic actors. Countries including Indonesia, Australia, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Pakistan, Israel, and several others occupy this category because they exert considerable regional influence while simultaneously balancing relationships among larger powers. The remaining Middle Powers continue to contribute to regional and international cooperation, although their influence is generally exercised within the existing international framework rather than through the creation of new international norms.

Applying this comparative taxonomy, the presentation examined Russia's strategic position within Asia. Russia was presented as a country that enjoys relatively favourable relations across the region because, unlike many external powers, it does not carry a colonial legacy in Southeast Asia. Russia's long-term strategic partnership with China was described as comprehensive and based upon shared strategic interests rather than a formal military alliance directed against other countries. According to the presentation, this partnership currently represents the strongest period of bilateral relations in recent history and constitutes an important pillar of regional stability.

The discussion further highlighted the strategic importance of ASEAN, India, and Indonesia within Russia's broader Asian policy. ASEAN was recognised as an important model of non-aligned, consensus-based regionalism whose centrality should be preserved. The presentation emphasised support for ASEAN's unity and expressed concern regarding attempts to divide the organisation into competing geopolitical blocs. India was identified as another significant strategic partner whose growing international role requires Russia to maintain balanced relations with both New Delhi and Beijing. Indonesia was described as a natural leader of the Global South, reflecting its demographic scale, growing international influence, membership of BRICS, and capacity to promote constructive dialogue among developing countries. The presentation further noted the positive momentum in bilateral relations between

Russia and Indonesia, supported by expanding political dialogue and economic cooperation.

Turning to global governance, the presentation reaffirmed Russia's continued support for the central role of the United Nations despite acknowledging its institutional limitations. Rather than replacing the United Nations, organisations including BRICS+, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) were presented as complementary mechanisms capable of strengthening international cooperation. These institutions provide additional platforms for political dialogue, economic cooperation, and regional security while supporting greater representation of the Global South within the evolving international system.

The presentation subsequently identified several practical areas in which Russia and Southeast Asian countries could strengthen cooperation. These include energy security, food security, defence and technical cooperation, the peaceful application of nuclear technology, space cooperation, digital and technological development, and broader political engagement through BRICS+. Beyond sectoral cooperation, the presentation proposed the establishment of an informal strategic dialogue resembling a "Counter Davos", bringing together policymakers, scholars, former political leaders, military practitioners, journalists, and business representatives to discuss long-term solutions to contemporary geopolitical, economic, technological, and security challenges. Indonesia was proposed as a suitable venue for the first meeting of the proposed dialogue platform, given its growing international standing and its capacity to facilitate inclusive dialogue between the Global South and the wider international community.

Conclusion

The presentation concluded that the contemporary international order should be understood through a broader conception of comparative power rather than conventional measures based solely on economic or military capability. Within an increasingly multipolar environment, states perform different strategic functions according to their relative capabilities, institutional influence, historical experience, and geopolitical position. This perspective provides a more comprehensive understanding of how countries contribute to international stability and cooperation beyond traditional power hierarchies.

The presentation further emphasised that Russia supports an inclusive multipolar order by upholding the central role of the United Nations while encouraging complementary cooperation through organisations including BRICS+, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, and the Eurasian Economic Union. At the regional level, ASEAN centrality, balanced relations with

China and India, and deeper engagement with Southeast Asia were identified as important components of Russia's long-term strategic approach.

Finally, the presentation highlighted Indonesia's growing importance as a leading country of the Global South and an increasingly influential participant in global governance. Expanding cooperation in energy, food security, defence, peaceful nuclear technology, digital innovation, education, and multilateral dialogue offers practical opportunities to strengthen Russia–Southeast Asia relations. The presentation concluded by reaffirming that multipolarity represents a new equilibrium, and that constructive cooperation, inclusive dialogue, and pragmatic partnerships remain essential for navigating an increasingly complex international environment.

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From Fragility to Resilience: Revitalising International Legal Order in an Era of Strategic Ambiguity

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Abstract
This paper examines the constrained yet meaningful role of international law in managing contemporary geopolitical disputes from the perspective of a middle power. It argues that international law's effectiveness is fundamentally limited by the absence of enforcement mechanisms binding sovereign states, a constraint most visible in security-related disputes such as the South China Sea. Through Indonesia's diplomatic engagement with China on overlapping maritime claims and its unresolved Exclusive Economic Zone boundary with Vietnam, the paper illustrates the dilemmas confronting middle powers navigating competing major-power interests. Two complementary strategies are proposed: preserving the status quo through cooperation and awaiting more internationally committed leadership. The paper concludes that Indonesia's "free and active" foreign policy remains its most viable strategy for balancing national interest with broad diplomatic engagement.

Keywords: Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), Free and Active Foreign Policy, International Law, Middle Power, South China Sea.

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Introduction

The contemporary international legal order faces increasing pressure from intensifying geopolitical rivalry, strategic competition, and declining trust among major powers. Although international law continues to provide an important normative framework governing relation among sovereign states, its practical effectiveness is increasingly challenged when disputes involve national security and competing strategic interests. This situation raises an important question concerning the extent to which international law remains capable of contributing to the peaceful settlement of interstate disputes.

The discussion further emphasises that international law continues to play an essential role in regulating relations among states. Nevertheless, its practical effectiveness remains constrained when competing strategic interests dominate political decision-making. Under these conditions, legal principles alone cannot always resolve interstate disputes, highlighting the continuing importance of diplomacy, political commitment, and confidence-building initiatives in supporting peaceful conflict management.

Within this context, the paper further explores Indonesia's diplomatic engagement with China concerning overlapping maritime claims in the South China Sea, as well as the unresolved ratification of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) boundary agreement with Vietnam, as concrete illustrations of the constraints confronting a middle power operating between competing major-power interests. Building on these illustrations, the paper considers the strategic options available to Indonesia and comparable states in managing such disputes without resorting to escalation, before assessing the continued relevance of Indonesia's "free and active" (bebas aktif) foreign policy as a framework for reconciling the pursuit of national interests with the maintenance of broad and constructive diplomatic relations. In doing so, the paper argues that international law and diplomacy should be understood not as competing instruments but as complementary mechanisms through which middle powers may contribute to the peaceful management of contemporary geopolitical disputes.

Result and Discussion

First, the discussion establishes that international law possesses a limited capacity to respond to contemporary geopolitical dynamics, particularly with respect to security-related issues. The central argument advanced rests on a fundamental distinction between domestic and international legal systems. Within a domestic legal system, governmental authority stands above citizens and private entities, enabling coercive enforcement of law, including arrest and sanction. In the international environment, by contrast, no equivalent authority exists, such that state compliance with international legal norms remains essentially voluntary in nature. This absence of an enforcement mechanism is identified as the principal structural weakness constraining international law's capacity to regulate the conduct of sovereign states.

The discussion further argues that the practical influence of international law becomes increasingly circumscribed when disputes implicate security interests, whereas, on non-security matters, international law is regarded as functioning relatively more effectively as a framework for interstate cooperation. In contemporary armed conflicts, opposing parties frequently invoke differing provisions of international law to justify their respective positions. As illustrated in the discussion, competing interpretations of the United Nations Charter may be advanced simultaneously by different parties to the same conflict. Persistent legal disagreement often arises because no authoritative judicial institution possesses the practical capacity to determine conclusively which interpretation should prevail when sovereign states decline to accept an adverse outcome. Leadership dynamics are further identified as a factor shaping how major powers construe and apply international legal norms. By way of illustration, reference is made to the position adopted by the United States leadership in asserting that reference to international law was unnecessary in the case concerning the arrest of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro. A further example is provided by the 2016 ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA), which rejected the legal basis of China's historical claims in the South China Sea and is widely regarded as a legal victory for the Philippines; however, the ruling proved ineffective in practice after China openly refused to recognise it. Both examples substantiate the paper's central thesis that, in interstate relations, power ultimately prevails over law, enabling more powerful states to determine what is regarded as "right" according to their strategic interests rather than according to international normative consensus.

Indonesia's position as a middle power is illustrated through several concrete diplomatic measures. A state visit by the President of the Republic of Indonesia to China resulted in a joint statement proposing a breakthrough through joint development in areas of overlapping maritime claims. Subsequent diplomatic engagement with the United States introduced additional complexity, as a joint statement issued during the presidential visit reaffirmed the importance of international law and UNCLOS. That position stood in implicit tension with China's rejection of the 2016 PCA ruling. Negotiations leading to UNCLOS focused on establishing a new legal framework to replace the 1958 Convention on the Law of the Sea during a period in which developing countries exercised considerable influence in multilateral negotiations. Broad international consensus consequently emerged in support of substantial legal reform. Contemporary geopolitical disputes, by contrast, primarily stem from strategic rivalry and national security considerations, making comparable consensus considerably more difficult to achieve. A persistent dilemma therefore confronts middle powers: preserving constructive relations with major powers whose strategic interests and legal positions diverge while operating within limited diplomatic latitude to align decisively with either normative framework without incurring diplomatic risks.

In response to this situation, the presentation puts forward two complementary strategic approaches. The first emphasises the importance of maintaining the status quo while avoiding escalation, prioritising the peaceful management of differences, and expanding cooperation in areas where the interests of states may converge. The second approach is more long-term in character, entailing a period of waiting for a change in global leadership toward figures more genuinely committed to upholding international law, peace, and multilateral cooperation. In this connection, ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) is highlighted as an important regional instrument for affirming the region's commitment to peace, while simultaneously signalling to the international community that ASEAN has no intention of allowing rising tensions to escalate into open conflict.

Continuing relevance of Indonesia's "free and active" (bebas aktif) foreign policy is reaffirmed as the most appropriate strategy for navigating contemporary strategic ambiguity. Implementation of a free and active policy requires careful and deliberate balance, given that a state's natural tendency to lean towards one party on a given issue risks undermining the very principle of neutrality that defines the policy. Equivalence between a free and active policy and passive neutrality is nevertheless rejected. A free and active policy continues to afford Indonesia the latitude to take a firm stance and assert its national interests whenever those interests are perceived to be under threat, while upholding the principle of "many friends, zero enemies" as the guiding orientation of Indonesian diplomacy amid an increasingly complex geopolitical landscape.

Complementary functions performed by international law and diplomacy in managing contemporary geopolitical disputes are further recognised. International law continues to provide the normative framework governing relations among states, whereas diplomatic initiatives create practical opportunities to sustain dialogue and confidence when legal mechanisms alone cannot produce mutually acceptable outcomes.

Conclusion

International law continues to function as essential normative framework governing relations among states; however, fundamental structural limitations become apparent when disputes involve security interests and the geopolitical interests of major powers. The absence of an enforcement authority comparable to that found within domestic legal systems renders compliance with international legal norms heavily contingent upon the political will of individual states, such that power ultimately proves more determinative than law itself. China's rejection of the 2016 PCA ruling, together with the stance adopted by United States leadership in dismissing reference to international law in certain cases, stands as concrete evidence of this condition. Indonesia's position as a middle power is consequently confronted with the dual challenge of preserving strategic relations with major powers whose legal positions frequently diverge while simultaneously safeguarding national interests, as reflected in the complexity surrounding the joint development initiative with China in the South China Sea and the still-pending ratification of the EEZ boundary agreement with Vietnam. Resolution of maritime disputes in the region therefore cannot rest solely on a legal-formal approach but instead requires a more adaptive and long-term diplomatic strategy.

Maintaining the status quo through strengthened cooperation and the peaceful management of differences, together with awaiting a shift in global leadership towards greater commitment to international law, indicates that the strategic posture of a middle power such as Indonesia is inherently a medium- to long-term undertaking rather than an instant solution. Strengthening regional instruments such as ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) remains vital to affirming the region's commitment to peace and preventing the escalation of tensions into open conflict. Indonesia nevertheless continues to possess an important role as a middle power through constructive diplomatic engagement. A "free and active" foreign policy remains the most relevant approach for navigating contemporary strategic ambiguity, while practical initiatives that strengthen confidence, facilitate dialogue, and support peaceful negotiation complement international law by creating opportunities for peaceful conflict management while recognising the political realities that characterise the contemporary international system.

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2nd Plenary Session

The Shift Toward Strategic Protectionism: Power Competition Across Green Energy, Financial Systems and International Trade

Moderator

Prof. Telisa Aulia Falianty

Professor of Economics
Faculty of Economics and Business - University of Indonesia

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Rebalancing Power through Trade: Tariffs and Strategic Competition in an Era of Economic Slowdown

Dyah Roro Esti Widya Putri
Vice Minister of Trade of the Republic of Indonesia

Special Remarks

International trade is increasingly shaped by tariffs, export controls, sanctions, and strategic competition, transforming trade from a mechanism of market access into an instrument closely linked to national security, technological leadership, industrial policy, and geopolitical influence. As supply chains are reconfigured and investment decisions become more complex, Indonesia maintains that trade should remain a bridge rather than a battlefield, promoting stability, prosperity, and international cooperation amid growing global fragmentation.

Indonesia's response combines strategic flexibility, diversified partnerships, and open economic engagement. ASEAN centrality remains the foundation of regional integration, while Indonesia strengthens South–South cooperation through BRICS and continues active engagement with the OECD, G20, APEC, and the World Trade Organization. At the domestic level, competitiveness is reinforced through industrial upgrading, downstream value addition, digital transformation, and resilient supply chains to reduce excessive dependence on any single market, technology, or supply chain while preserving Indonesia's role as an open and trusted trading partner.

The presentation emphasised that multilateral economic institutions remain essential but require reform to reflect contemporary realities. Indonesia therefore supports strengthening the WTO dispute settlement system, updating trade rules for the digital economy, improving IMF governance, and expanding the World Bank's capacity to support infrastructure, climate transition, food security, and human capital development. Reform was presented as fundamental to maintaining institutional legitimacy, trust, and effective multilateral cooperation.

Growing reliance on tariffs, sanctions, export controls, and investment restrictions has increased uncertainty for economies integrated into global value chains. Indonesia

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therefore builds resilience by diversifying export markets and investment partners, expanding market access through trade agreements, and investing in advanced technologies, digital infrastructure, green industries, and human capital. Supported by around twenty trade agreements covering more than sixty per cent of Indonesia's international trade, this strategy also promotes business cooperation, technology and knowledge transfer, stronger people-to-people relations, and the long-term vision of Golden Indonesia 2045.

Constructive engagement remains central to Indonesia's economic diplomacy. Indonesia's experience in responding to international trade investigations, including the Section 301 process, demonstrates the importance of evidence-based dialogue, bilateral consultation, and pragmatic negotiation. A pentahelix approach involving government, business, academia, civil society, and the media was presented as essential for strengthening policy coordination, negotiating capacity, and public understanding while reinforcing Indonesia's position in international trade negotiations.

The presentation concluded that the future of international trade will depend on tariffs, market access, and the level of trust among governments, businesses, and international institutions. Indonesia remains committed to strengthening an open, fair, predictable, and rules-based multilateral trading system through diversification, inclusive reform, and collaborative diplomacy.

Publication Note
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Currency Competition in Transition: De-dollarisation, Gold, Digital Money, and the Future of Global Trade and Regional Cooperation

Shaokai Fan
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Abstract

This paper discusses the growing influence of geopolitical developments on the international financial and monetary system, with particular emphasis on the changing role of gold as a reserve asset. The presentation explains current developments in global gold demand and supply, the increasing importance of emerging markets, and the sustained rise in central bank gold purchases since 2022 following heightened geopolitical tensions. It further examines how central banks are strengthening reserve diversification by increasing gold holdings, adjusting reserve storage strategies, and gradually reducing dependence on traditional reserve assets while maintaining the continued importance of the US dollar. Attention is given to Indonesia's strategic position as one of the world's leading gold producers and to opportunities for strengthening the domestic gold ecosystem through bullion banking and financial market development. The presentation also discusses the growing role of digital assets, cryptocurrencies, and stablecoins within the international financial system. It concludes that geopolitical uncertainty is accelerating reserve diversification, with gold increasingly supporting financial resilience while de-dollarisation remains a gradual rather than abrupt process.

Keywords: Central Bank Reserves, De-dollarisation, Digital Money, Gold, Geopolitical Risk.

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Introduction

The international financial system is increasingly experiencing the spillover effects of geopolitical developments that extend beyond trade and security into monetary and reserve management. As geopolitical competition intensifies, financial markets are becoming another arena in which countries reassess economic resilience, strategic autonomy, and reserve management policies. Within this environment, gold has attracted renewed attention because of its long-established role as a trusted reserve asset and its independence from the liabilities of any individual country.

The presentation provides an overview of current developments in the global gold market. Although gold remains one of the world's scarcest commodities, with total above-ground stocks estimated at approximately 220,000 tonnes, global demand continues to expand. Around seventy per cent of worldwide gold demand now originates from emerging market economies, compared with thirty per cent from developed economies, representing a significant reversal from the market structure observed two decades earlier. China and India together account for approximately half of global gold demand, while countries including Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam continue to strengthen their positions within the global market.

The discussion further highlights Indonesia's strategic importance within the international gold industry. As the tenth-largest gold producer globally and the largest producer in Southeast Asia, Indonesia occupies a favourable position to benefit from sustained demand and higher gold prices. The presentation also notes ongoing collaboration between the World Gold Council and the Government of Indonesia to develop a national gold roadmap, strengthen bullion banking services, and improve the integrity of the domestic gold supply chain.

Result and Discussion

The presentation explains that gold production is geographically diversified across every continent except Antarctica, making global supply more resilient than many other strategic commodities because production is less exposed to concentrated supply disruptions. Indonesia's position as a major gold producer therefore offers significant opportunities to strengthen both its mining industry and its broader financial system.

A central theme of the presentation concerns the changing role of gold in central bank reserve management. Although central banks reduced gold holdings following the collapse of the Bretton Woods system, this trend reversed in 2010 when they became consistent net purchasers. Annual acquisitions increased markedly after 2022, rising to around one thousand tonnes compared with approximately five hundred tonnes previously. This shift was closely linked to the geopolitical consequences of the conflict in Ukraine, which exposed the vulnerability of foreign exchange reserves held abroad, while domestically stored gold remained fully accessible. Consequently, many central banks increased gold holdings to strengthen strategic autonomy and reduce dependence on foreign financial jurisdictions.

The presentation identifies two factors underlying gold's growing importance. Gold is the only major reserve asset that is not issued as the liability of another sovereign state, and it exists as a physical asset that can be stored or transferred according to national security considerations. These characteristics have reinforced its attractiveness during periods of geopolitical uncertainty.

Central bank reserve strategies increasingly reflect both economic and geopolitical considerations. Poland became the largest purchaser of gold during 2025 and 2026, while China significantly expanded its acquisitions. Indonesia also continued increasing its reserves alongside several emerging economies, whereas Türkiye and Russia reduced part of their holdings in response to domestic economic and fiscal pressures. Consistent with these developments, the World Gold Council reported that forty-five per cent of surveyed central banks intend to increase gold holdings over the next twelve months, while expectations regarding the relative share of the US dollar in global reserves continue to decline. Reserve management has also evolved through the repatriation of gold reserves and the diversification of overseas storage locations beyond traditional financial centres.

Beyond reserve assets, the presentation discusses the growing role of digital finance. Cryptocurrencies and stablecoins are becoming increasingly integrated into institutional and retail investment portfolios despite continuing market volatility. However, US dollar-backed stablecoins should be understood as alternative mechanisms for holding dollar-denominated assets rather than substitutes for the US dollar itself.

The presentation concludes by highlighting opportunities for Indonesia to strengthen its position in the international gold market through the development of bullion banking, expansion of domestic gold services, and deeper integration of gold into the national financial system. At the regional level, initiatives by Singapore and Hong Kong to develop major international gold trading centres further demonstrate Asia's expanding role in the global precious metals market.

Conclusion

The presentation concludes that geopolitical developments are increasingly influencing international financial markets, reserve management, and monetary policy decisions. Central banks worldwide continue to strengthen financial resilience by diversifying reserve portfolios, increasing gold holdings, and reviewing reserve management strategies while maintaining confidence in gold as an independent and highly liquid reserve asset.

The discussion further emphasises that de-dollarisation should be understood as a gradual process rather than an immediate replacement of the US dollar. Although the US dollar remains the world's dominant reserve currency, many countries are strengthening strategic autonomy through broader reserve diversification that includes greater allocations to gold alongside growing participation in digital financial assets. Within this evolving financial landscape, Indonesia is well positioned to benefit from its role as a leading gold producer while strengthening its domestic gold ecosystem and supporting greater resilience within the national financial system.

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Advancing a Sustainable Green Economy: Cooperation, Strategic Resources, and the Future of Industrial Transformation

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Abstract

This paper discusses Indonesia's strategic position in the global transition towards a sustainable green economy, particularly through its substantial critical mineral resources and nickel downstreaming policy. Indonesia holds a significant share of global nickel reserves and possesses other critical minerals required for clean technology development. The presentation argues that responsible downstreaming can increase domestic value creation, support economic transformation, and contribute to Indonesia's long-term development targets. Nevertheless, green industrial policies may produce exclusionary effects when international standards, trade measures, and regulatory requirements restrict market access or disregard the domestic frameworks of producer countries. Cooperative green industrial measures should therefore expand clean technology capacity, accelerate industrial decarbonisation, distribute value fairly across supply chains, and recognise equivalent domestic regulations. The presentation proposes three principles for sustainable industrial standards: mutual recognition between domestic and international frameworks, support for technology transfer, investment, capacity development, and skills, and appropriate market recognition for responsibly produced goods. It concludes that producers, consumers, standard-setting bodies, and other relevant stakeholders should jointly formulate interoperable rules rather than allow any single bloc to determine global standards unilaterally.

Keywords: Critical Minerals, Green Economy, Industrial Decarbonisation, Nickel Downstreaming, Regulatory Cooperation.

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Introduction

The transition towards a sustainable green economy has become one of the defining challenges of contemporary global development. Rising geopolitical fragmentation, intensifying competition for critical minerals, and increasingly diverse sustainability standards have reshaped the international policy landscape, requiring countries to balance economic growth, industrial competitiveness, and environmental responsibility. These developments present challenges for resource-rich economies striving to strengthen their position within global value chains while maintaining equitable access to international markets.

Indonesia occupies a strategic position within the global critical minerals industry. The country possesses the world's largest nickel reserves together with substantial deposits of cobalt, tin, copper, and other critical minerals that support clean technology industries. This resource endowment provides important opportunities to accelerate industrial transformation through downstream processing, expand domestic value creation, and strengthen national economic resilience. Consequently, downstream industrialisation has become an integral component of Indonesia's long-term development strategy to support higher economic growth and the transition towards Indonesia Emas 2045.

Achieving these objectives requires industrial policies that integrate economic development with environmental sustainability. Green industrial development should promote cleaner production, encourage technological innovation, strengthen industrial competitiveness, and create broader economic opportunities while supporting climate objectives. Rather than treating economic growth and environmental protection as competing priorities, both should reinforce one another through responsible resource management and sustainable industrial transformation.

The growing fragmentation of international sustainability standards also presents important policy challenges for developing economies. Sustainability frameworks should encourage cooperation, facilitate technology transfer, strengthen investment, and improve market access. However, when standards, regulations, or industrial policies become instruments that restrict trade or disadvantage producing countries, they risk functioning as barriers that weaken rather than strengthen international cooperation. Developing more inclusive governance arrangements based on mutual recognition and shared responsibility therefore becomes increasingly important for supporting sustainable industrial development within an evolving global economy.

Result and Discussion

Indonesia occupies a strategic position in the global critical minerals' economy. The presentation highlighted that the country possesses approximately 60 million tonnes of nickel reserves, representing around 44 percent of global nickel deposits. Indonesia also holds substantial reserves of several other critical minerals, including tin, cobalt, bauxite, and copper, placing the country in a favourable position to support the future development of global clean technology industries. Figure 1 illustrates Indonesia's leading position in global nickel reserves and mine production, together with its substantial resource potential and processing capacity, highlighting the country's strategic role in the global critical minerals supply chain. The presentation further noted that these strategic advantages provide important opportunities for Indonesia to contribute to the future development of critical mineral industries.

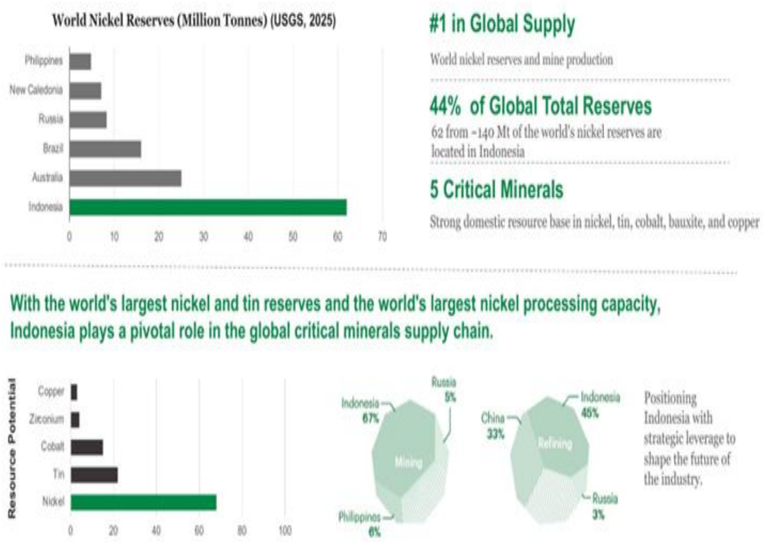


Figure 1. Indonesia's Strategic Position in the Global Critical Minerals Economy
Source: WRI Indonesia presentation, based on USGS (2025)

The presentation further explained that Indonesia's downstreaming policy has become one of the government's strategic priorities for increasing domestic value creation. Rather than exporting raw nickel, Indonesia has increasingly expanded downstream processing industries to produce higher-value products. According to the presentation, the value of downstream nickel exports increased from approximately USD 3 billion in 2010 to around USD 34 billion in 2022-2023, demonstrating the growing contribution of downstream industrialisation to national economic development. Figure 2 illustrates the substantial increase in downstream nickel export value and highlights downstream industrialisation as a foundation for expanding value-added processing across other strategic commodities with high economic potential.

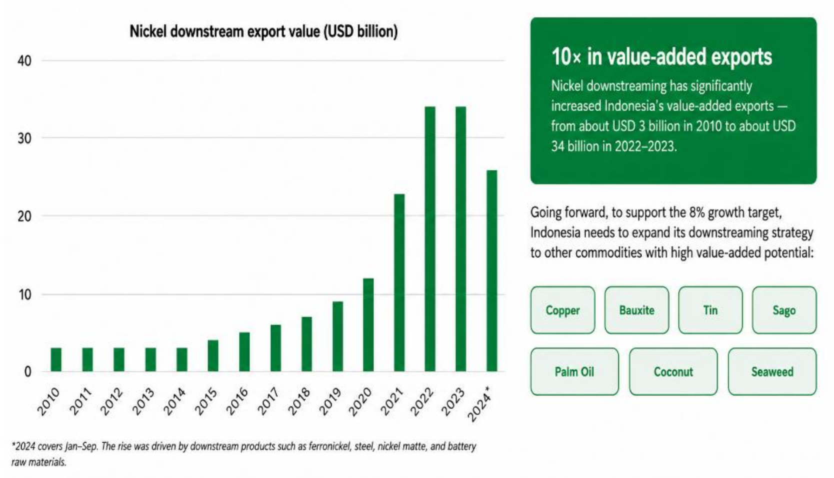
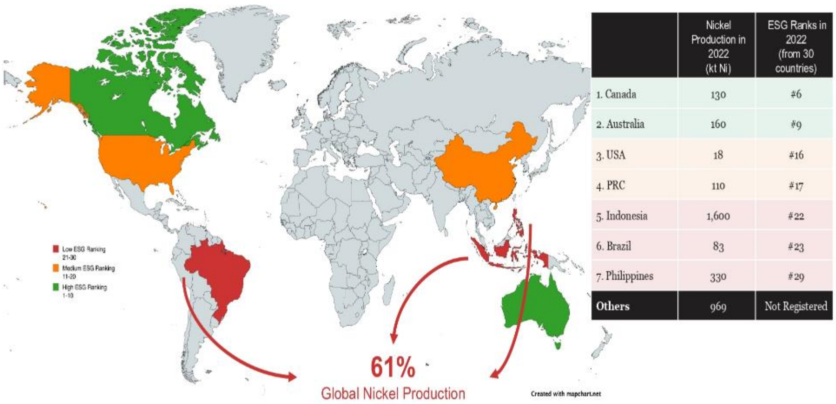


Figure 2. Nickel Downstreaming as a Strategic Driver of Economic Growth
Source: Trade Map; RPJMN 2025-2029. Presented by WRI Indonesia.

The presentation emphasised that economic transformation should proceed together with environmental sustainability. Green industrial development should therefore support climate action while simultaneously strengthening industrial competitiveness and inclusive economic growth. Responsible nickel downstreaming was presented as one of the principal strategies for achieving Indonesia's long-term economic transformation.

The presentation acknowledged that increasing fragmentation of international sustainability standards presents important challenges for developing economies. Green industrial policies should therefore expand cooperation, accelerate industrial decarbonisation, and generate shared value across global supply chains rather than creating exclusionary trade measures or non-tariff barriers. Figure 3 illustrates the ESG performance of major nickel-producing countries, showing that Indonesia, Brazil, and the Philippines collectively account for approximately 61% of global nickel production despite recording relatively low ESG rankings. The comparison highlights the importance of strengthening environmental, social, and governance performance alongside industrial development to enhance long-term competitiveness within global supply chains.



	Nickel Production in 2022 (kt Ni)	ESG Ranks in 2022 (from 30 countries)
1. Canada	130	#6
2. Australia	160	#9
3. USA	18	#16
4. PRC	110	#17
5. Indonesia	1,600	#22
6. Brazil	83	#23
7. Philippines	330	#29
Others	969	Not Registered

Figure 3. ESG Performance of Major Nickel-Producing Countries
Source: Adapted from WRI Indonesia (2025), based on BloombergNEF, Global Battery Supply Chain Rankings (2022) and United States Geological Survey (USGS) (2023)

The presentation referred to a long-term assessment conducted by WRI Indonesia to examine Indonesia's future development pathways. According to the assessment, a green economy pathway offers stronger long-term economic growth than a business-as-usual scenario and provides a more favourable trajectory towards Indonesia's transition to a high-income economy. The assessment further indicates that the green economy pathway sustains stronger economic performance over the long term, whereas growth under the business-as-usual scenario gradually declines after 2045. Industrial competitiveness, environmental sustainability, and inclusive development should therefore progress together as integral components of national economic transformation. Figure 4 compares the projected economic performance under a green economy pathway and a business-as-usual scenario.

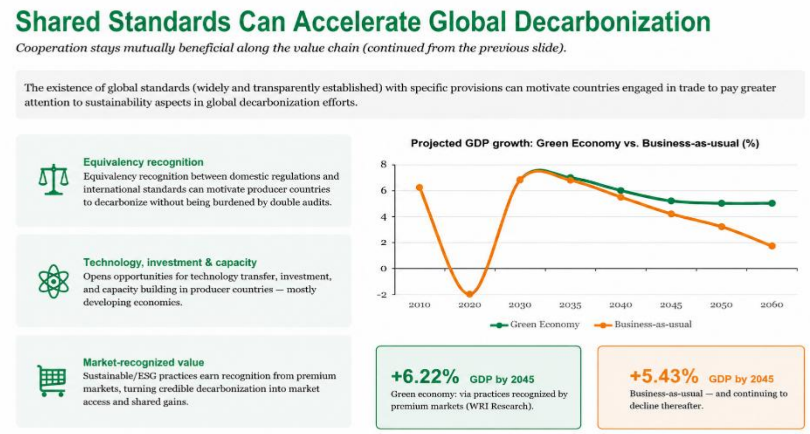


Figure 4. Projected GDP Growth: Green Economy versus Business-as-Usual
Source: WRI Research.

The presentation further argued that many differences between domestic regulations and international sustainability standards arise from variations in regulatory approaches rather than from an absence of environmental or social safeguards. Greater mutual recognition between domestic regulations and international standards therefore represents an important step towards creating a more inclusive global industrial system. Three guiding principles strengthen future green industrial cooperation. First, domestic regulations and international standards should receive equivalent recognition whenever they pursue comparable objectives. Second, sustainability frameworks should promote technology transfer, investment, capacity building, and skills development. Third, sustainability standards should create shared value across global supply chains while supporting responsible production and fair market access.

The presentation concluded that no single country or regional bloc should determine global sustainability standards independently. Governments, producing countries, consuming countries, standard-setting organisations, financial institutions, and other relevant stakeholders should jointly develop interoperable standards based on cooperation, mutual recognition, and shared responsibility. Collective action remains essential for supporting sustainable industrial transformation while maintaining an open and inclusive international trading system.

Three guiding principles were presented for strengthening future green industrial cooperation. First, domestic regulations and international standards should receive equivalent recognition whenever they pursue comparable objectives. Second, sustainability frameworks should promote technology transfer, investment, capacity building, and skills development. Third, sustainability standards should generate shared value across global supply chains while supporting responsible production and fair market access.

Finally, the presentation emphasised that no single country or regional bloc should determine global sustainability standards independently. Governments, producing countries, consuming countries, standard-setting organisations, financial institutions, and other relevant stakeholders should instead jointly develop interoperable standards based on cooperation, mutual recognition, and shared responsibility. Cooperative standard-setting remains essential for supporting sustainable industrial transformation while maintaining an open and inclusive international trading system.

Conclusion

The presentation concluded that Indonesia's abundant critical mineral resources provide a strong foundation for sustainable industrial transformation and long-term economic development. However, maximising these advantages requires downstream industrialisation, responsible resource management, and the integration of environmental sustainability with national economic priorities.

The presentation further emphasises that green industrial policies should promote cooperation rather than economic exclusion. International sustainability standards should facilitate technology transfer, investment, capacity building, and equitable market access while avoiding their use as discriminatory trade measures or non-tariff barriers. Greater interoperability and mutual recognition between domestic regulations and international standards were identified as important elements for supporting an inclusive and balanced global industrial system.

Finally, the presentation emphasises that the governance of critical minerals should be developed through collaborative international engagement involving producing countries, consuming countries, standard-setting organisations, financial institutions, and other relevant stakeholders. This cooperation is considered essential for advancing a sustainable green economy while strengthening economic resilience, industrial competitiveness, and shared prosperity within an increasingly fragmented global environment.

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Reconfiguring Regional Supply Chains and Logistics: Diversification, Intra-Regional Trade, and Economic Resilience

Ben Lawson
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Abstract.

This paper examines Indonesia's strategic position within global mineral supply chains amid increasing geopolitical fragmentation and supply chain disruption. The presentation discusses downstream industrialisation, logistics, energy security, investment certainty, and technology transfer as key elements supporting economic resilience. It argues that Indonesia's abundant natural resources provide a strong foundation for long-term industrial development, provided they are supported by predictable regulations, competitive investment policies, and pragmatic government action. The presentation concludes that regulatory certainty, rather than resource availability, represents one of the most important determinants of Indonesia's ability to strengthen supply chain resilience and achieve its long-term development objectives.

Keywords: Economic resilience, Investment certainty, Logistics, Mineral supply chains, Technology transfer.

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Introduction

Recent global disruptions, including the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical tensions affecting international trade routes, have exposed the vulnerability of highly interconnected global supply chains. Disruptions occurring in one part of the world can rapidly propagate across production networks, affecting industrial output, logistics, energy security, and international trade. These developments have reinforced the importance of building more diversified, resilient, and adaptive supply chains capable of responding to geopolitical uncertainty while sustaining long-term economic growth.

Within this evolving environment, Indonesia occupies an increasingly strategic position in global mineral and energy supply chains. As one of the world's leading producers of nickel and an important supplier of cobalt, copper, bauxite, gold, and other critical minerals, Indonesia plays an essential role in supporting manufacturing, clean energy technologies, and industrial development worldwide. At the same time, the country's expanding downstream industries provide opportunities to increase domestic value creation while strengthening its position within regional and global production networks.

The presentation examined several strategic issues that influence Indonesia's future supply chain resilience. These include downstream industrialisation, logistics efficiency, regional trade integration, energy security, investment certainty, technology transfer, and regulatory consistency. Together, these issues demonstrate that strengthening Indonesia's competitiveness requires not only abundant natural resources but also supportive public policies capable of encouraging sustainable investment, industrial development, and long-term economic resilience.

Result and Discussion

Indonesia occupies a strategically important position within global mineral and energy supply chains. The country is the world's leading producer of nickel and one of the major producers of cobalt, copper, bauxite, and gold. Ongoing initiatives to develop lithium extraction technologies and programmes supporting rare earth minerals further strengthen Indonesia's contribution to manufacturing, energy transition technologies, and industrial development.

Downstream mineral industrialisation has strengthened Indonesia's ability to generate greater domestic value addition. Processing minerals domestically rather than exporting raw ores has increased industrial competitiveness while reducing dependence on commodity exports. This approach has also enabled Indonesia to avoid many of the characteristics commonly associated with the resource curse, while creating stronger foundations for long-term industrial development.

Growing geopolitical competition is increasingly reshaping global supply chains and encouraging producer countries to participate in competing economic arrangements. Within this environment, maintaining balanced economic engagement while preserving broad market access remains important for protecting Indonesia's long-term national interests and strategic flexibility.

Domestic logistics continue to represent one of the principal structural challenges affecting Indonesia's competitiveness. Relatively high transportation costs between Indonesian regions limit supply chain efficiency and regional economic integration. Improving logistics infrastructure, transport connectivity, and payment systems therefore remains essential for strengthening Indonesia's resilience within regional and global supply chains.

Energy security also remains an important component of Indonesia's industrial development strategy. Renewable energy development, cleaner utilisation of domestic coal resources, waste-to-energy technologies, and biodiesel production represent complementary approaches for supporting future energy demand. These approaches should remain aligned with Indonesia's resource endowment, economic conditions, and long-term national development priorities.

Regulatory certainty remains fundamental for attracting long-term investment. Stable regulations, transparent licensing procedures, predictable fiscal policies, and legal certainty provide important foundations for strengthening investment in the mining and energy sectors. Competitive exploration policies also remain necessary to encourage future mineral discoveries and sustain industrial expansion.

Technology transfer constitutes another essential component of sustainable industrial development. Beyond financial investment, international cooperation should facilitate the transfer of knowledge, technical expertise, and workforce capabilities to strengthen Indonesia's domestic industrial capacity while supporting the long-term objectives of *Indonesia Emas 2045.*

Several policy issues continue to influence investment competitiveness, including production quota arrangements, export proceeds regulations, taxation, royalty policies, commodity pricing mechanisms, and biodiesel implementation. Addressing these issues through pragmatic policymaking, regulatory consistency, and a supportive investment environment will strengthen Indonesia's competitiveness while enhancing resilience within an increasingly dynamic global economy.

Conclusion

Indonesia possesses significant strategic advantages within global mineral and energy supply chains through its abundant natural resources and expanding downstream industries. These strengths provide substantial opportunities to strengthen industrial development, economic resilience, and regional supply chain integration.

Realising these opportunities requires predictable regulations, efficient logistics, competitive investment policies, continued downstream industrialisation, and sustained technology transfer. Together, these elements provide an important foundation for strengthening industrial competitiveness, attracting long-term investment, and supporting sustainable economic development.

Pragmatic policymaking, balanced international engagement, and close collaboration between government, industry, and investors will remain essential for strengthening Indonesia's long-term competitiveness. Strengthening these foundations will support Indonesia's aspiration to achieve sustainable industrial transformation and realise the vision of Indonesia Emas 2045 amid an increasingly dynamic global economic environment.

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3rd Plenary Session

Global Technology Competition, the Demographic Dividend and Cybersecurity Challenges in the Digital Economic Transformation

Moderator
Ir. Edi Permadi

Professional Expert of Lemhannas RI

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Cyber Power and Global Competition: How Small and Middle Powers Can Leverage Digital Economic Transformation

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Special Remarks

Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping global economic and geopolitical competition as a general-purpose technology whose strategic value depends not only on innovation but also on its widespread application across the real economy. Lasting technological leadership requires human capital, engineering capability, digital infrastructure, and institutional readiness that enable AI adoption across manufacturing, healthcare, education, logistics, and public services. Historical experience demonstrates that competitive advantage depends on diffusing technological innovation throughout productive sectors rather than introducing breakthroughs alone.

Strategic rivalry between the United States and China has intensified competition in semiconductors, computing technologies, export controls, and critical mineral supply chains, extending beyond frontier innovation to broader industrial ecosystems and computing capacity. These developments also create opportunities for small and middle powers to strengthen their strategic relevance by leveraging national comparative advantages.

Indonesia possesses important strategic assets to support its role in the digital economy. The presentation introduced digital statecraft as the strategic management of digital ecosystems to advance national objectives through economic and technological instruments. Four complementary sources of national leverage were identified: resource power, market power, demographic power, and compute power. Indonesia's reserves of nickel, cobalt, copper, bauxite, and silica, combined with its large digital economy and young population, provide significant advantages that should be supported by stronger computing capability, advanced digital talent, and industrial capacity to generate greater value beyond resource extraction.

Critical minerals were presented as Indonesia's principal strategic advantage in the emerging AI economy. Their importance extends beyond commodity production to supporting batteries, semiconductors, data centres, and AI infrastructure, while creating opportunities to secure technology transfer, advanced manufacturing partnerships, and deeper participation in global technology value chains.

The presentation further identified data sovereignty as the foundation connecting all dimensions of digital statecraft. As AI increasingly depends on data generated across economic and public activities, governance should strengthen domestic capability, support technology transfer, and ensure that AI systems reflect Indonesia's language, legal framework, and national priorities while maintaining international cooperation.

Indonesia's digital transformation should advance through two complementary strategies: leveraging critical minerals to expand access to computing technologies, semiconductor capability, manufacturing partnerships, and advanced processing, while strengthening sovereign computing capacity through investment in data centres, secure cloud infrastructure, research institutions, semiconductor capability, and highly skilled digital talent. These priorities are reinforced through chip diplomacy, reliable energy infrastructure, AI and semiconductor talent development, stronger data sovereignty, and AI systems designed to address Indonesia's national context.

The presentation concluded that long-term technological competitiveness depends on sustained political commitment, institutional continuity, and investment in strategic capability. By integrating critical minerals, digital markets, demographic advantages, computing capacity, and institutional strength, Indonesia can reinforce its position as an indispensable technological partner while enhancing national resilience and competitiveness in an increasingly contested digital environment.

Publication Note

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Technological Disruption and the Future of Labour Market

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Abstract.

This paper discusses the transition from industrial automation towards autonomous operations amid global fragmentation, strategic protectionism, cybersecurity challenges, digital sovereignty, and changing supply chains. The presentation explains how software-defined automation, artificial intelligence, digital twin technology, and integrated robotics contribute to safer operations, improved decision-making, higher productivity, and greater operational resilience across manufacturing, mining, oil and gas, power generation, logistics, and related industries. It further highlights the progressive evolution from pre-digital operations to autonomous plants, demonstrating that technological transformation should advance together with workforce transformation. Findings presented from the 11th Annual State of Smart Manufacturing Report indicate that intelligent systems are intended to augment human capabilities rather than replace them, while organisations increasingly invest in workforce reskilling and capability development. For Indonesia, responsible automation provides opportunities to expand industrial capacity, attract investment, improve competitiveness, and create higher-quality employment. The presentation concludes that technological innovation and workforce development should progress simultaneously to strengthen sustainable industrial growth.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Autonomous Operations, Industrial Automation, Smart Manufacturing, Workforce Reskilling.

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Introduction

Industrial operations are entering a new phase in which conventional automation is progressively evolving towards autonomous operation, driven by advances in software-defined automation, artificial intelligence, integrated robotics, and digital connectivity. These technological developments are transforming the way industrial facilities are designed, operated, and maintained while enabling higher levels of operational efficiency, flexibility, safety, and resilience. Manufacturing, mining, oil and gas, power generation, logistics, water management, and other industrial sectors are increasingly adopting intelligent systems that support more adaptive and data-driven decision-making throughout the operational lifecycle.

These developments coincide with broader changes in the global environment, where supply chain disruption, strategic protectionism, digital sovereignty, and geopolitical fragmentation are reshaping industrial priorities. Organisations are therefore expected not only to improve productivity but also to strengthen operational resilience by adopting technologies capable of responding more effectively to increasingly complex operating conditions. Within this environment, autonomous operations represent the next stage of industrial transformation, extending beyond programmable automation by enabling intelligent systems to interpret operational conditions, generate recommendations, and support decision-making with minimal human intervention.

The presentation further emphasises that technological transformation should be accompanied by workforce transformation. Rather than replacing human resources, intelligent technologies create opportunities for redesigning work, strengthening technical capabilities, and expanding higher-value occupations. Consequently, industrial competitiveness increasingly depends upon the ability to integrate technological innovation with continuous workforce development through reskilling, capability enhancement, and closer collaboration between technology and human expertise. For Indonesia, this transformation offers significant opportunities to strengthen industrial capacity, improve productivity, enhance workplace safety, and support sustainable economic growth through a more competitive and highly skilled workforce.

Result and Discussion

The presentation outlines the evolution of industrial technology through four successive industrial revolutions before introducing the transition towards autonomous operations. Industry 1.0 was characterised by mechanisation, followed by Industry 2.0 through the introduction of electricity and mass production. Industry 3.0 introduced programmable automation and industrial computing, while Industry 4.0 incorporated digitalisation, connectivity, and data integration. The current period represents an inflection point in which industrial operations are progressively moving beyond conventional automation towards autonomous operations. Unlike traditional automation, where systems execute predefined instructions, autonomous operations apply data, analytics, and artificial intelligence to interpret operating conditions, recommend actions, and, where appropriate, respond automatically.

The transformation towards autonomous operations follows a progressive pathway rather than occurring as a single technological leap. Industrial facilities commonly evolve from pre-digital environments characterised by predominantly manual processes towards digital silos, where individual systems become digital but remain disconnected. The next stage establishes connected operations through greater integration of operational data, followed by predictive operations that anticipate operational issues and support more informed decision-making. The final stage is autonomous operation, where intelligent systems become increasingly adaptive, highly integrated, and capable of continuously optimising operational performance. Throughout this transformation, the objective remains to support people rather than replace them by enabling safer working environments, higher productivity, and greater emphasis on higher-value responsibilities.

Achieving autonomous operations requires the integration of several complementary technologies. Software-defined automation provides operational flexibility by separating software from hardware, enabling systems to be configured and modified more efficiently. The presentation illustrates this capability through digital twin technology, which creates a virtual representation of industrial operations. Digital twins enable organisations to simulate, test, validate, and optimise operational changes before implementation, thereby reducing operational risk while improving planning and system performance.

Artificial intelligence further strengthens industrial performance across the design, operation, and maintenance phases. During the design phase, AI assists in generating and validating system logic, configurations, and operational behaviour more efficiently. During operations, AI supports production planning, material movement, sensing, process optimisation, and operational control. During maintenance, AI continuously analyses equipment conditions, predicts potential failures before breakdowns occur, and improves equipment availability through more effective maintenance planning.

The presentation also demonstrates the practical application of artificial intelligence in quality inspection through computer vision systems capable of identifying product anomalies and defects that may occur infrequently but nevertheless affect product quality. This capability improves inspection speed, consistency, and overall quality assurance. In process industries, including mining, oil and gas, chemicals, petrochemicals, power generation, and manufacturing, artificial intelligence combined with advanced analytics enables simultaneous analysis of multiple operational variables, allowing earlier detection of operational constraints and supporting more stable, efficient, and reliable production processes.

Artificial intelligence also plays an important role in predictive maintenance. By analysing work orders together with equipment operating data, intelligent systems identify anomalies, forecast maintenance delays, and anticipate spare-part requirements before failures occur. This approach enables maintenance activities to shift from reactive responses towards proactive planning, reducing unplanned downtime while improving operational reliability and asset performance.

The presentation further introduces integrated robotics through Autonomous Mobile Robots (AMRs), which automate repetitive material-handling activities traditionally performed manually. The application of AMRs improves workplace safety, reduces operational errors, increases efficiency, and enables employees to concentrate on activities requiring greater technical judgement and problem-solving capability.

Workforce transformation constitutes an equally important component of industrial transformation. Findings presented from the 11th Annual State of Smart Manufacturing Report, based on a global survey of 1,500 industrial and manufacturing leaders, demonstrate that intelligent technologies are intended to augment rather than replace human capabilities. As intelligent systems become embedded within daily industrial operations, workforce roles and competency requirements continue to evolve. The presentation reports that 93% of surveyed organisations anticipate substantial workforce transformation, while 40% have already implemented workforce reskilling initiatives. These findings reinforce the importance of investing simultaneously in automation technologies and human capability development.

Three principal workforce implications are emphasised. First, work itself is being redesigned as repetitive and hazardous activities become increasingly supported by intelligent technologies. Second, workforce reskilling has become a core organisational capability accompanying technological transformation. Third, Indonesia possesses significant opportunities to expand industrial capacity, strengthen competitiveness, attract investment, and create higher-quality employment through responsible adoption of automation and autonomous operations. Accordingly, technological advancement should enhance industrial capability and job quality rather than simply reduce labour costs.

Conclusion

The presentation concludes that autonomous operations represent the next stage of industrial transformation, integrating software-defined automation, artificial intelligence, digital twin technology, advanced analytics, and robotics to improve productivity, operational resilience, workplace safety, and decision-making across industrial sectors.

The discussion highlights three principal messages. First, industrial work is being redesigned as intelligent technologies increasingly undertake repetitive activities while enabling workers to focus on higher-value responsibilities. Second, workforce reskilling should become a core organisational capability accompanying every stage of technological transformation. Third, Indonesia has substantial opportunities to strengthen industrial competitiveness by expanding industrial capacity, attracting investment, and creating higher-quality employment through responsible adoption of automation and autonomous operations. Technological transformation should therefore strengthen industrial performance while simultaneously improving workforce capability and job quality rather than serving primarily as a mechanism for reducing labour costs.

Publication Note

This article presents an academic adaptation of the presentation delivered at the 10th Jakarta Geopolitical Forum (JGF X) 2026. Editorial revisions were limited to structure, language, and readability, while the speaker's original arguments, meaning, and policy recommendations remain unchanged.

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Future Digital Resilience in Safeguarding Critical Infrastructure and Securing Digital Economy

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Abstract

Accelerating digital transformation, geopolitical fragmentation, and advances in artificial intelligence and quantum computing have elevated cybersecurity from a technical issue to a strategic imperative for protecting national infrastructure. This paper examines how middle powers can strengthen resilience amid growing dependence on interconnected digital ecosystems and increasingly sophisticated cyber threats. It argues that sustainable capability is shaped by two structural realities: the substantial investment required to develop advanced digital infrastructure and the practical limitations that prevent any country from independently mastering every critical technology. Consequently, infrastructure-agnostic solutions supported by trusted international partnerships become essential for ensuring operational continuity and security. Drawing on Thales' experience in post-quantum cryptography, sovereign cloud computing, digital identity, and trustworthy artificial intelligence, the paper highlights practical approaches to strengthening sovereign capabilities through technology transfer, local industrial participation, and knowledge development. Indonesia is presented as an example of how long-term collaboration can reinforce cybersecurity, protect critical infrastructure, and support sustainable digital transformation. The paper concludes that credible resilience depends on combining international cooperation with sustained investment in domestic expertise and innovation.

Keywords: Critical Infrastructure, Cybersecurity, Digital Resilience, Sovereign Technology, Trusted Partnership.

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Introduction

Digitalisation has significantly improved security, connectivity, and operational efficiency while simultaneously creating new vulnerabilities across critical infrastructure. The accelerating integration of digital technologies into public services, financial systems, transportation, cloud computing, and communication networks has expanded the cyber threat landscape, particularly amid growing geopolitical fragmentation and rapid advances in artificial intelligence and quantum computing. These developments have elevated digital resilience from a technical concern to a strategic priority for ensuring the continuity, adaptability, and security of critical national infrastructure.

The presentation examined how middle-sized countries can strengthen cyber resilience despite increasing dependence on globally interconnected digital infrastructure and rapidly evolving technologies. It argued that effective resilience requires recognising two structural realities: the substantial investment needed to develop advanced digital infrastructure and the practical limitations preventing any single country from mastering every critical technology independently. These conditions reinforce the importance of trusted technological partnerships and infrastructure-agnostic solutions capable of maintaining secure and reliable operations across diverse digital environments.

Drawing on Thales' experience in cybersecurity, defence technologies, cloud computing, digital identity, and artificial intelligence, the presentation explored practical approaches to strengthening sovereign technological capability. Attention was given to Indonesia as Southeast Asia's largest digital economy, where technology transfer, local industrial participation, knowledge development, and long-term partnerships were presented as fundamental elements for reinforcing digital resilience, protecting critical infrastructure, and supporting sustainable digital transformation.

Result and Discussion

Digitalisation has transformed the operation of modern societies by improving security, efficiency, and connectivity across digital identity, financial services, air traffic management, cloud computing, and interconnected networks. At the same time, increasing digital dependence has expanded vulnerabilities across these systems. As digital technologies become more deeply integrated into critical functions, cyber risks continue to grow alongside the complexity of digital ecosystems and the increasing use of interconnected infrastructure.

The presentation identified two major factors driving this acceleration in cyber vulnerability. The first is the intensification of geopolitical tensions, where the digital and cyber domains have become arenas of strategic competition, extending beyond conventional cyberattacks to broader disruptions across technological and electromagnetic environments. The second is rapid technological advancement, particularly the emergence of AI-powered cyberattacks and the future impact of quantum computing on existing cybersecurity systems. Together, these developments raise a common challenge for middle-sized countries, including Indonesia and France, to ensure the continuity, resilience, and adaptability of essential infrastructure against increasingly sophisticated threats.

Responding to this challenge requires recognising two structural realities. Developing advanced digital infrastructure demands investments that only a limited number of global hyperscalers are currently able to provide, while no middle-sized country can independently master every advanced digital and cybersecurity technology. These conditions reinforce the importance of trusted technological partnerships capable of providing leading technological capability. Consequently, resilience depends on developing infrastructure-agnostic solutions that continue to operate securely across different digital architectures despite increasing infrastructure fragmentation.

The presentation illustrated this approach through three technological initiatives developed by Thales. The first is post-quantum cryptography, supported by sovereign hardware security modules developed and mastered end-to-end to strengthen cybersecurity before quantum computing becomes operational. The second is sovereign cloud computing, which combines hyperscale cloud infrastructure with national oversight and cybersecurity certification to deliver trusted cloud services while maintaining sovereign control over critical digital assets. The third is trustworthy artificial intelligence, where algorithms, training data, and operational outputs are mastered end-to-end to support defence mission systems through sovereign AI solutions designed for secure and reliable decision support.

These principles have been implemented through Thales' long-standing partnership with Indonesia across defence systems, air traffic management, satellite programmes, digital identity, and cybersecurity. Beyond delivering technology, the partnership places particular emphasis on local industrial participation, domestic operation and maintenance, technology transfer, and the development of local know-how through collaboration with Indonesian partners and national institutions. This approach helps ensure that the resilience of Indonesia's digital systems is supported by expertise developed and sustained within the country itself.

Building credible resilience therefore rests on three complementary foundations: recognising digital security as a strategic requirement throughout the digital ecosystem, strengthening technological knowledge and local know-how within Indonesia, and selecting trusted partners that reinforce long-term resilience rather than long-term dependency. These priorities align with Indonesia's national cybersecurity strategy and support the development of secure, resilient, and sovereign digital capabilities in an increasingly fragmented technological environment.

Conclusion

Building credible digital resilience requires a comprehensive approach that enables essential services and critical infrastructure to remain secure and operational amid geopolitical uncertainty and rapid technological change. The presentation emphasised that resilience depends on three mutually reinforcing priorities: recognising digital security as a strategic requirement across the entire digital ecosystem, strengthening technological knowledge and local know-how, and establishing trusted partnerships that support long-term resilience rather than long-term dependency.

These priorities reflect Indonesia's efforts to strengthen its national cybersecurity strategy while adapting to emerging challenges associated with artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and increasingly interconnected digital infrastructure. Through trusted technological partnerships, infrastructure-agnostic solutions, and sustained investment in local capability, digital resilience becomes not only a cybersecurity objective but also a foundation for safeguarding critical infrastructure, supporting digital economic transformation, and reinforcing Indonesia's long-term technological resilience.

Publication Note
This article presents an academic adaptation of the presentation delivered at the 10th Jakarta Geopolitical Forum (JGF X) 2026. Editorial revisions were limited to structure, language, and readability, while the speaker's original arguments, meaning, and policy recommendations remain unchanged.

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Ethics and Responsibility in the Governance of Artificial Intelligence

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Abstract.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming business, government, and society at a pace that exceeds the development of governance frameworks. This article presents an academic adaptation of Patrick Rudolf Dannacher's presentation at the 10th Jakarta Geopolitical Forum 2026, examining Indonesia's strategic position in the evolving global AI landscape. The presentation argued that Indonesia should become a rule shaper rather than a rule taker by developing governance frameworks that reflect national and regional priorities instead of relying solely on external regulatory models. Responsible AI requires more than ethical principles; it depends on capable institutions, effective implementation, qualified professionals, and credible regulatory mechanisms. Key challenges identified include fragmented governance, implementation gaps, and operational risks associated with large language models, including prompt injection, hallucination, and data leakage. The presentation further emphasised the importance of independent AI assurance, certification systems, and institutional readiness to support responsible AI adoption across strategic sectors. Building digital talent and governance capability was presented as the essential foundation for reducing implementation gaps and strengthening long-term competitiveness. The presentation concluded that developing national capability while adapting international best practices provides the most appropriate pathway for enabling Indonesia to contribute to the future development of AI governance.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; Digital Governance; Ethics; Regulation; Rule Shaping.

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Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) has rapidly evolved from an emerging technology into an integral component of business operations, public services, and everyday life. The accelerating adoption of AI has created significant opportunities for innovation, productivity, and digital transformation, while simultaneously raising new questions regarding ethics, regulation, and institutional preparedness. As AI systems become increasingly embedded in critical sectors, ensuring their responsible implementation has become an important strategic issue for governments, industry, and society.

This article is an academic adaptation of the presentation delivered by Patrick Rudolf Dannacher, President Director and CEO of PT ITSEC Asia Tbk, during the 10th Jakarta Geopolitical Forum 2026. The presentation examined Indonesia's strategic position in the evolving AI landscape by raising a fundamental question: should Indonesia and Southeast Asia become rule shapers, contributing to the development of AI governance frameworks, or remain rule takers, relying primarily on regulations formulated by other jurisdictions? The presentation argued that this choice extends beyond technological adoption and requires the development of institutional capability that reflects national and regional priorities.

The presentation further emphasised that responsible AI cannot be achieved solely through ethical principles or regulatory declarations. Effective implementation requires capable institutions, credible regulatory mechanisms, qualified professionals, and practical governance arrangements that translate principles into operational practice. Within this context, the discussion explored the relationship between regulation, institutional capacity, certification, and human capital as essential elements for strengthening Indonesia's readiness to respond to the rapid development of artificial intelligence while contributing to regional and international cooperation.

Result and Discussion

The presentation opened by explaining that artificial intelligence (AI) has become an integral component of business operations, public services, and everyday life. As AI technologies continue to evolve at an unprecedented pace, governance frameworks have struggled to keep pace with widespread adoption. Although ethical principles have become central to discussions surrounding AI, the presentation emphasised that ethical values alone cannot ensure responsible implementation. The statement, "ethics without capabilities are just decoration," reinforced the argument that responsible AI requires capable institutions, competent professionals, and practical implementation mechanisms capable of translating principles into effective action.

A central theme of the presentation concerned Indonesia's strategic position within the evolving global AI landscape. The discussion presented two alternative roles: becoming a rule shaper by actively contributing to the development of governance frameworks or remaining a rule taker by adopting regulatory models established elsewhere. Regulatory approaches developed in Europe, China, or the United States may not necessarily correspond to Indonesia's institutional, legal, and socio-economic conditions. Consequently, the presentation advocated stronger cooperation among Southeast Asian countries to develop governance frameworks that reflect regional priorities while remaining compatible with international developments, thereby strengthening digital sovereignty and regional strategic capability.

The presentation further highlighted that the effectiveness of AI regulation depends not only on the existence of formal rules but also on institutional implementation. Regulations become meaningful only when consistently applied across government institutions, industry, and society. Practical challenges associated with large language models were illustrated through examples of prompt injection, hallucination, data leakage, and excessive reliance on AI-generated responses. These risks become increasingly significant when AI applications are deployed within defence, law enforcement, government institutions, and critical infrastructure, where operational failures may generate broader security implications.

Geopolitical competition in artificial intelligence was illustrated through the analogy of a World Cup, where major powers compete to define the rules governing future technological development. Within this environment, Southeast Asian countries were encouraged to strengthen regional cooperation rather than depend upon governance frameworks designed by larger geopolitical actors. Developing indigenous regulatory capability was presented as an essential prerequisite for enabling Indonesia and the region to participate actively in shaping international AI standards instead of merely complying with externally established regulations.

A second analogy compared AI governance with a football match in which rules alone cannot guarantee fair competition without qualified referees responsible for enforcing them. Similarly, AI governance requires competent regulators, auditors, inspectors, certification bodies, and independent AI assurance mechanisms capable of evaluating compliance and managing emerging risks. Indonesia's experience in establishing large-scale certification systems was presented as evidence that comparable institutional arrangements could also be developed for artificial intelligence, thereby strengthening public confidence while supporting responsible AI adoption across both the public and private sectors.

Human capital emerged as another major concern throughout the presentation. Indonesia is projected to experience a shortage of approximately nine million ICT professionals by

2030, creating significant challenges for AI implementation and digital transformation. Rather than viewing AI primarily as a source of labour displacement, the presentation emphasised the importance of preparing professionals for new occupations created through technological advancement. Investment in education, professional certification, governance training, leadership development, and institutional capacity was therefore identified as an essential foundation for strengthening long-term national competitiveness. The establishment of the ITSEC Asia Cybersecurity and AI Academy was presented as one practical initiative designed to prepare professionals across government institutions, defence organisations, regulators, financial institutions, telecommunications providers, and operators of critical infrastructure with both technical expertise and governance capability.

The presentation concluded by outlining four strategic priorities for Indonesia: adopting risk-based AI regulation, strengthening regional cooperation through certification and governance frameworks, establishing independent AI assurance, and investing continuously in digital talent development. Three strategic pathways were subsequently presented: waiting to adopt regulations developed elsewhere, replicating existing regulatory frameworks, or building national capability while adapting international best practices to domestic requirements. Among these alternatives, capability development accompanied by calibrated regulation was presented as the most appropriate pathway for enabling Indonesia to become a rule shaper capable of contributing to regional and global AI governance while strengthening national resilience in the digital era.

Conclusion

The presentation concluded that Indonesia's future role in artificial intelligence will depend not only on technological adoption but also on its capacity to shape the rules governing its development and implementation. Becoming a rule shaper requires more than regulatory ambition; it demands capable institutions, qualified professionals, effective certification mechanisms, and credible implementation arrangements that translate ethical principles into practical action. The presentation further emphasised that regulations should be developed in accordance with Indonesia's national interests while remaining responsive to regional and international developments, rather than being adopted without adaptation.

The discussion also highlighted that sustainable AI governance depends upon strengthening institutional capability and human capital. Investment in education, professional certification, AI assurance, and governance capacity was presented as an essential foundation for reducing implementation gaps and supporting responsible AI adoption across strategic sectors. Building national capability while calibrating international best practices to domestic requirements was ultimately presented as the most appropriate pathway for enabling Indonesia to participate actively in shaping the future of AI governance.

Publication Note
This article presents an academic adaptation of the presentation delivered at the 10th Jakarta Geopolitical Forum (JGF X) 2026. Editorial revisions were limited to structure, language, and readability, while the speaker's original arguments, meaning, and policy recommendations remain unchanged.

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Conference Summary at the Jakarta Geopolitical Forum X/2026: Strengthening Multilateralism: Survival Amid Global Turbulence and a Fragmented World

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Bismillahirrahmanirrahim.
Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.
May peace and blessings be upon us.
Om Swastiastu, Namo Buddhaya, Salam Kebajikan.

The Honourable Governor of the National Resilience Institute of the Republic of Indonesia, Dr. H. TB Ace Hasan Syadzily;

The Honourable Vice Governor of the National Resilience Institute of the Republic of Indonesia;

Excellencies; distinguished moderators, speakers, and participants, both here in the conference hall and joining us online; ladies and gentlemen.

We have now reached the conclusion of the forum, and it is my honour to present a summary of the substantive discussions of the 10th Jakarta Geopolitical Forum 2026.

Under the theme, "Strengthening Multilateralism: Survival Amid Global Turbulence and a Fragmented World," a common question emerged throughout every session: Who will write the next set of global rules, and who will build the capability to live by them? Writing the rules is one challenge; possessing the infrastructure, economic strength, institutional resilience, and technological capability to survive and prosper under those rules is another.

This morning, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, His Excellency Sugiono, opened our discussions by asking whether multilateralism can still deliver. His answer was clear: yes-but not on autopilot. The remedy for imperfect multilateralism is not less multilateralism, but better multilateralism. He reaffirmed Indonesia's Bebas Aktif foreign policy as an approach that expands strategic space rather than forcing countries to choose between competing blocs. That strategic space must ultimately be anchored in national capability, because sovereignty is meaningful only when supported by resilience and capacity.

Our first plenary session examined the future of multilateralism in an increasingly multipolar world. Professor Nick Bisley reminded us that middle powers cannot reshape the international order through grand strategic designs. Instead, they must pursue pragmatic, issue-based coalitions built upon shared interests, practical leadership, and tangible outcomes, as demonstrated by countries that sustained the Comprehensive and Progressive The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), sustained following the withdrawal of the United States, demonstrates the continuing relevance of this form of cooperation in areas including maritime security, domestic resilience, and economic diversification.

Professor Georgy Toloraya presented a perspective in which emerging platforms such as BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation complement rather than replace the United Nations. In his view, multipolarity should not be interpreted as disorder, but as a search for a new international equilibrium. He also proposed stronger engagement between ASEAN and Eurasian institutions through economic cooperation, energy collaboration, civilian nuclear development, and cooperation on ethical frameworks for artificial intelligence.

Professor Hikmahanto Juwana reminded us that international law continues to face significant limitations whenever major powers choose to disregard established legal decisions. Nevertheless, he emphasised that Indonesia should remain committed to preventing escalation, maintaining dialogue wherever cooperation remains possible, and consistently implementing its Bebas Aktif foreign policy with many friends and no enemies. Although each speaker approached the issue from different perspectives, the session ultimately converged on a shared conclusion: the international order is under considerable pressure, and middle powers must respond through pragmatic cooperation, sustained diplomacy, and strengthened multilateral engagement rather than confrontation.

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Closing Remarks at the Jakarta Geopolitical Forum X/2026: Strengthening Multilateralism: Survival Amid Global Turbulence and a Fragmented World

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The 10th Jakarta Geopolitical Forum (JGF X) 2026 provided an important platform for strategic dialogue, knowledge exchange, and policy deliberation under the theme Strengthening Multilateralism: Survival Amid Global Turbulence and a Fragmented World. The active participation of keynote speakers, special remarks speakers, plenary speakers, moderators, policymakers, diplomats, academics, researchers, industry representatives, media partners, and participants enriched the discussions and reinforced the strategic relevance of the forum. Their collective contributions enhanced the substantive value of the forum while strengthening dialogue on multilateral cooperation in an increasingly fragmented international environment.

The forum reaffirmed that multilateralism remains a strategic necessity rather than merely an aspirational principle. For small and middle powers, including Indonesia, effective multilateral cooperation provides an essential foundation for safeguarding sovereignty, maintaining predictability, promoting equitable partnerships, and preserving international peace amid shifting geopolitical dynamics. The first plenary session highlighted that the weakening of multilateralism reflects not only institutional shortcomings but also shifting power relations, strategic ambiguity, and the erosion of respect for international norms. Accordingly, middle powers should continue strengthening rules-based cooperation through regional partnerships, legal innovation, and consistent diplomacy.

The three plenary sessions collectively highlighted the multidimensional nature of contemporary geopolitical challenges. The second plenary session demonstrated that economic policy has become inseparable from national security, with tariffs, sanctions, critical minerals, green industrial policy, currency competition, and supply-chain reconfiguration increasingly functioning as strategic instruments that require adaptive, resilient, and pragmatic policy responses. The third plenary session further emphasised that technological competition, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, digital infrastructure, and the future of work will significantly shape national resilience. The discussions also reaffirmed that the demographic dividend can only become a strategic advantage when supported by sustained investment in human capital development, digital skills, data governance, ethical artificial intelligence, and secure critical infrastructure.

The forum further agreed that its deliberations should extend beyond academic exchange and generate practical policy contributions. The proceedings, the Forum Pulse, and the substantive recommendations developed through the forum will provide strategic inputs for national decision-makers while supporting Indonesia's national resilience and its constructive contribution to regional and global governance. These outputs are expected to serve as practical references for government institutions, academia, industry, think tanks, and international partners in responding to the evolving geopolitical, geoeconomic, and geotechnological landscape.

The discussions also produced a shared understanding that middle powers should remain active contributors rather than passive observers within an increasingly fragmented international system. Indonesia's independent and active foreign policy continues to provide an appropriate framework for strengthening strategic partnerships, maintaining balanced international relations, safeguarding national interests, and contributing to a peaceful, inclusive, and rules-based international order. Within this context, strengthening resilience requires simultaneous progress at the national, regional, and global levels through strong institutions, high-quality human resources, economic competitiveness, energy security, digital readiness, ASEAN cohesion, practical regional cooperation, revitalised multilateralism, and continued respect for international law.

Finally, the forum reaffirmed that trade diversification, green economic transformation, resilient supply chains, digital sovereignty, and cybersecurity should ultimately contribute to safeguarding Indonesia's sovereignty, advancing national prosperity, and supporting a more stable, peaceful, and sustainable international order. The forum concluded with the shared aspiration that the partnerships, dialogue, and ideas developed throughout the discussions will continue to evolve into concrete cooperation for Indonesia, the region, and the wider international community.

SPEAKER PROFILE

SUGIONO

Sugiono was born in Takengon, Aceh, on 11 February 1979. He has served as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia since 21 October 2024. He earned a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) in Computer Science from Norwich University, Vermont, and later completed a Master of Business Administration (MBA). Before his appointment as Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sugiono gained extensive experience in the military, business, and politics. He served as a First Officer in the Indonesian Army Special Forces Command (Kopassus) from 2002 to 2005, President Director of PT Kiani Lestari from 2007 to 2015, Vice Chairman of the GERINDRA Party from 2009 to 2025, and Vice Chairman of Commission I of the House of Representatives from 2023 to 2024, overseeing defence, foreign affairs, communications and informatics, and intelligence. Since 2025, he has also served as Secretary-General of the GERINDRA Party.

DYAH RORO ESTI WIDYA PUTRI

Dyah Roro Esti Widya Putri has served as Vice Minister of Trade of the Republic of Indonesia in the Merah Putih Cabinet since October 2024. Previously, she was a Member of the House of Representatives (2019–2024), representing the East Java X electoral district, where she focused on energy, environmental, research, and technology issues. She earned a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Economics and Sociology and a Postgraduate Diploma in Social Change from the University of Manchester, followed by a Master of Science in Environmental Technology from Imperial College London. Throughout her career, she has actively promoted sustainable development, the green economy, and climate action through parliamentary diplomacy and public policy. She is also the Founder and Chair of the Indonesian Energy and Environmental Institute (IE2I).

NEZAR PATRIA

Nezar Patria has served as Vice Minister of Communications and Digital Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia since 2024. He holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Universitas Gadjah Mada, an M.Sc. in History of International Relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), and an ASEAN MBA through a dual-degree programme between Universiti Sains Malaysia and the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB). Before joining the government, he held senior leadership positions at The Jakarta Post, CNN Indonesia, and Viva.co.id, and also served at Pos Indonesia and the Ministry of State-Owned Enterprises. His expertise spans digital transformation, artificial intelligence policy, media, strategic communication, and digital governance.

NICK BISLEY

Nick Bisley is Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) and Professor of International Relations at La Trobe University. He currently serves as the Australian Member Committee Co-Chair of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) and recently completed eight years as Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at La Trobe University. Between 2022 and 2024, he served as President of the Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities, and in 2020 he was elected a Fellow of the Australian Institute of International Affairs. He previously served as Editor-in-Chief of the Australian Journal of International Affairs from 2013 to 2018 and has been a Senior Research Associate at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) as well as a Visiting Fellow at the East-West Center in Washington, D.C. His research focuses on Asia's international relations, great power politics, and Australian foreign and defence policy. His latest book, Asian Crucible: Globalization, Geopolitics and the Contest for the Future, was recently published by Bristol University Press. He regularly contributes to leading international media, including The Economist, South China Morning Post, CNN, and Time magazine.

GEORGY TOLORAYA

Georgy Toloraya is a former diplomat with the rank of Minister and a distinguished scholar specialising in Asian affairs and global governance. He currently serves as Academic Supervisor at the School of Oriental Studies, HSE University, Moscow. He also conducts research as Director of the Centre for Asian Strategy and Chief Researcher at both the Institute of Economics and the Institute of China and Contemporary Asia of the Russian Academy of Sciences. After graduating from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) in 1978, he obtained his Ph.D. in 1984, his Doctor of Economics degree in 1994, and the title of Full Professor in 2002. Throughout his diplomatic career, he served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and various international organisations. His overseas postings included two assignments in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Deputy Chief of Mission at the Russian Embassy in the Republic of Korea (ROK), Consul General of Russia in Sydney, Australia, and membership of the United Nations Security Council Panel of Experts from 2019 to 2024. He has collaborated with numerous academic institutions, served as a Visiting Fellow at the Brookings Institution, and published more than ten books and numerous scholarly articles on East Asia, BRICS, and global governance.

HIKMAHANTO JUWANA

Professor Dr. Hikmahanto Juwana is an Indonesian legal scholar specialising in international law. He has served as Professor of International Law at the Faculty of Law, Universitas Indonesia, since 2001. He obtained his Bachelor of Law degree from Universitas Indonesia, followed by a Master of Laws (LL.M.) from Keio University, Japan, and a Ph.D. from the University of Nottingham, United Kingdom. Throughout his distinguished career, Professor Hikmahanto has served as Dean of the Faculty of Law, Universitas Indonesia (2004–2008), Rector of Jenderal Achmad Yani University (2020–2025), legal adviser to various Indonesian government institutions, and Independent Commissioner of several major Indonesian companies. He has published extensively in the fields of international law and business law.

SHAOKAI FAN

Shaokai Fan advises governments, central banks, and sovereign wealth funds on gold-related policies and investment strategies while promoting the development of the global gold market. Prior to joining the World Gold Council, he held several senior positions at Standard Chartered Bank, including Director for Asia Strategic Initiatives and Associate Director for Public Sector Coverage. He also served as an International Economist at the United States Department of the Treasury and advised the Government of Taiwan on economic policy. Shaokai holds a master’s degree in public administration from Columbia University and the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), as well as a bachelor’s degree in finance and economics from New York University.

ARIEF WIJAYA

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Ben Lawson is Director of PT Sanaman Coal Indonesia, Lead Trader at Akkadian Resources Pte Ltd., and Vice-Chairman (Co-founder) of the Djakarta Mining Club, Indonesia's largest mining industry network. With nearly three decades of experience across Southeast Asia, he has advised international corporations and government institutions in infrastructure, energy, mining, commodities trading, and business development. His expertise spans coal, critical minerals, supply chain resilience, strategic resource development, and sustainable mining. He has also served as a consultant to BAPPENAS and the World Bank on infrastructure financing and extractive industry transparency initiatives.

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