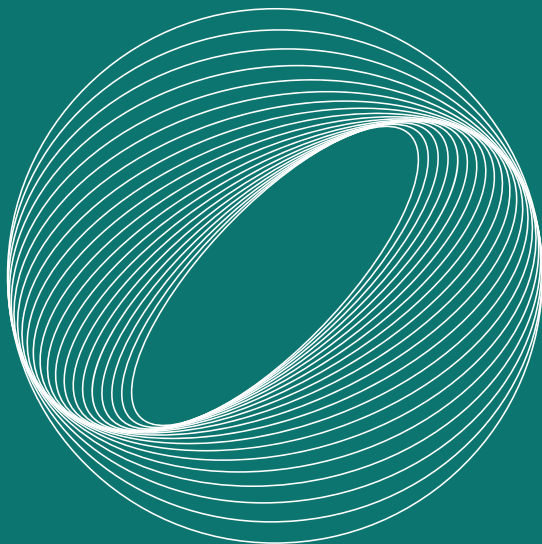




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INITIATING WORLD SOLIDARITY FOR PALESTINE IN THE 10TH WORLD WATER FORUM

Israel's attacks on Palestine have not subsided and have even heated up after the death of a humanitarian volunteer from World Central Kitchen (WCK). Palestinians have experienced crises, including water accessibility (Elmusa, 2024). Several countries are shedding light on this issue, advocating for humanity and striving for Palestinian independence from Israeli occupation. Indonesia is actively involved in this endeavour. Though positive outcomes in the UN Council are challenging to accomplish on this issue, states and non-state actors are actively advocating for Palestinian independence using a variety of instruments. One example is the use of an international event to draw attention to the suffering of the Palestinian people.

The 10th World Water Forum in Bali on 18-25 May 2024 serves as one of the strategic platforms for Indonesia to draw attention to the Israeli occupation of Palestine. It shows momentum for Indonesia to take an active role in supporting Palestinian freedom. Water shortage experienced by the Palestinians is a part of the shackles, violent of the basics right as this suffering situation is a part of Israeli occupation. It is undeniable that global solidarity for Palestine is an effort to show that the water issue cannot be separated from independence as a "right of all nations". Justice regarding water access can only be achieved if occupation like that carried out by Israel is stopped. Therefore, this forum, attended by heads of state, ministers, and youth from various countries, is a strategic means to make this happen.

As stated by Loïc Fauchon, President of the World Water Council, the water issue is political (World Water Forum, 2024). Indonesia as the host needs to go further than just discussing financialisation and innovation in providing water, as stated by President Joko Widodo (World Water Forum, 2024), but fighting for water rights for all and stopping all exploitation that hinders it. (Karunia Haganta, alums of Department of Anthropology, Universitas Indonesia).

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JOKOWI'S GLOBAL MARITIME FULCRUM: A BIG DREAM FOR INDONESIA, SUPPOSEDLY

During his first term, President Jokowi aimed to make Indonesia the Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) by emphasising the country's historical connection to the sea (Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2016). GMF represents Indonesia's commitment to becoming a key player in the region amidst the superpower rivalry that has become increasingly prevalent in the Indo-Pacific whereby the region is more interconnected than ever (Marsetio, 2017). It is worth examining the extent of Indonesia's efforts under Jokowi to achieve this ambitious goal.

The GMF is based on seven comprehensive pillars with core elements such as law enforcement, maritime culture, resource optimization, and marine governance development which serve as the foundation of Indonesia's marine development paradigm. The administration of Jokowi has made several efforts to achieve the GMF. Presidential Regulation No. 16/2017 on Indonesia's Marine Policy was issued by Jokowi, which explains Indonesia's vision for using its ocean territory (Kemenkomarves, 2017). In 2021, BAPPENAS issued the Blue Economy Development Framework for Indonesia's Economic Transformation, which discusses the transformation of the Indonesian economy towards a maritime-based economy. At the regional level, Indonesia, through ASEAN, encourages the development of the blue economy, as stated in the ASEAN Leader Declaration on Blue Economy in 2021. Additionally, ASEAN is a leverage for Indonesia's role in geopolitical matters in the Indo-Pacific with ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific as an effort to assert its position as a central actor in Indo-Pacific contestation.

Indonesia's vision of becoming the GMF has not been accompanied by a persistent focus on priorities. The implementation of the seven pillars of this dream is far from perfect. Indonesia's fisheries sector has not significantly contributed to the national GDP (SEAFDEC, 2022). Moreover, there has been a lack of improvement and development of infrastructure that supports maritime activities (Tiola, 2019). Overlapping agencies that care for ocean areas also pose a challenge (Laksmana, 2019). Finally, there is a need for development in Indonesia's naval power (Setiawan & Paschalina, 2020). To achieve the so-called Global Maritime Fulcrum, Indonesia must evaluate and improve its efforts. It is imperative that Indonesia persists in the development of maritime infrastructure and human resources, which will serve as the foundation for the advancement of the maritime transformation. However, it will be interesting to observe how the next government constructs a strategic agenda for Indonesia's maritime sector. Will there be a commitment to revive the GMF agenda, or will another big dream policy be proposed? Only time will tell. (Mohammad Kartika Diptya Laksana, HI UGM 2021).

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RESILIENCE AND RESISTANCE: MYANMAR'S STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY

The Junta's grip on power in Myanmar, though never absolute, faces its most significant challenge to date after three long years. Despite initial assertion of authority, recent territorial losses underscore the fragility of their control. Since it seized power, the military's ruthless campaigns against civilians have drawn condemnation from UN investigators and human rights organisations, rightly deemed as war crimes and crimes against humanity (Coren, 2024). However, their desperation in the face of growing opposition has only intensified the brutality. Reports from Coren (2024) paint the Junta's current campaign of terror as employing cruel tactics like burning, beheading, and aerial bombing, resulting in the displacement of nearly three million civilians. This escalation in violence, mainly since the February 2021 coup, aims to sow chaos and instil fear, a long-standing strategy of authoritarian regimes.

Remarkably, despite the Junta's crackdowns and power grabs, the ranks of protesters have swelled over the past three years. This swelling dissent has coalesced into a nationwide armed resistance movement, including ethnic rebel armies. The emergence of the Brotherhood Alliance has grounded pro-democracy forces and led to successful offensives, wresting control of major cities from the Junta's grasp for the first time (Ratcliffe, 2024).

In response to these setbacks, the Junta has resorted to desperate measures, including the enforcement of conscription laws targeting citizens aged 18 to 35 for men and 18 to 27 for women, as purportedly outlined in the 2010 People's Military Services Law (Naing, 2024). This move not only further endangers Myanmar's populace, already subject to violence and repression in their daily lives, but also places them directly on the front lines of conflict, exposing them to even greater peril.

By highlighting the Junta's escalating brutality, the resilience of the pro-democracy movement, and the consequences of its draconian policies, it becomes evident that Myanmar stands at a critical juncture. The international community must stand in solidarity with the people of Myanmar, supporting their struggle for freedom and justice. The forces of tyranny can be overcome through concerted efforts, paving the way for a democratic future in Myanmar. (Fattaa Hayyu Tri Hapsari, HI UGM 2021).

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