

Uncovering Indonesia's Dilemmatic Position in Myanmar's Conflict in 2023: A Stag Hunt Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This research analyzes why Indonesia has a dilemmatic position in Myanmar's conflict during its 2023 ASEAN chairmanship. It involves various actors, which consist of ethnic groups, political actors, states, international organizations, and great powers. It is rooted in historical, political, and socio-economic grievances, with deep-seated ethnic and religious divisions exacerbating tensions. The military coup in February 2021 has further escalated the conflict, leading to widespread protests, violence, and human rights abuses, which attract regional and international concern. During its 2023 chairmanship, Indonesia faced a dilemmatic position in relationship with ASEAN, the UN, China, and Russia. This research uses the qualitative method by collecting and analyzing secondary data published by institutions, organizations, and other sources. Then, Stag Hunt theory is used to analyze the reason why Indonesia could not de-escalate Myanmar's conflict during its chairmanship. It aims to explain the challenges that have been faced by Indonesia amid international expectations of it. Eventually, this research finds that Indonesia has a dilemmatic position because all actors play it safe in facing Myanmar's conflict. Even though the UN and the US support human rights and democracy, they did not fully establish a powerful decision that is in line with Indonesia in managing this conflict. On the other hand, Indonesia did not fully disturb China and Russia's interests due to its dependence on them.

Keywords: Myanmar's Conflict, ASEAN, Indonesia, Stag Hunt Theory

Penelitian ini menganalisis mengapa Indonesia memiliki posisi dilematis dalam konflik Myanmar selama kepemimpinannya di ASEAN tahun 2023. Penelitian ini melibatkan berbagai aktor, yang terdiri dari kelompok etnis, aktor politik, negara, organisasi internasional, dan kekuatan besar. Hal ini berakar pada keluhan historis, politik, dan sosial-ekonomi, dengan perpecahan etnis dan agama yang mengakar yang memperburuk ketegangan. Kudeta militer pada bulan Februari 2021 telah semakin meningkatkan konflik, yang menyebabkan protes, kekerasan, dan pelanggaran hak asasi manusia yang meluas, yang menarik perhatian regional dan internasional. Selama kepemimpinannya tahun 2023, Indonesia menghadapi posisi dilematis dalam hubungan dengan ASEAN, PBB, Tiongkok, dan Rusia. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan mengumpulkan dan menganalisis data sekunder yang dipublikasikan oleh lembaga, organisasi, dan sumber lainnya. Kemudian, teori Stag Hunt digunakan untuk menganalisis alasan mengapa Indonesia tidak dapat meredakan konflik Myanmar selama kepemimpinannya. Tujuannya adalah untuk menjelaskan tantangan yang dihadapi Indonesia di tengah harapan internasional terhadapnya. Akhirnya, penelitian ini menemukan bahwa Indonesia berada dalam posisi yang dilematis karena semua aktor bermain aman dalam menghadapi konflik Myanmar. Meskipun PBB dan AS mendukung hak asasi manusia dan demokrasi, mereka tidak sepenuhnya membuat keputusan yang kuat yang sejalan dengan Indonesia dalam mengelola konflik ini. Di sisi lain, Indonesia tidak sepenuhnya mengganggu kepentingan Tiongkok dan Rusia karena ketergantungannya pada keduanya.

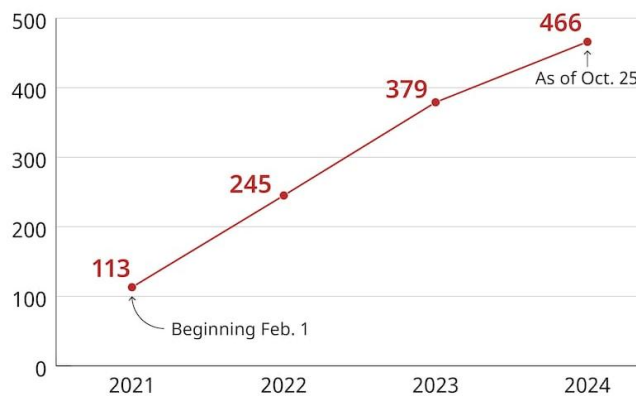
Kata Kunci: Konflik Myanmar, ASEAN, Indonesia, Teori Perburuan Rusa

Introduction

In the lead-up to its 2023 ASEAN chairmanship, Indonesia was expected and predicted to advance solutions for the Myanmar crisis. As the largest democracy in Southeast Asia and a founding member of ASEAN, Indonesia was seen as having both the moral authority and diplomatic leverage to lead an effective regional response. Many observers believed that Indonesia's experience with democratic transition and its prior success in chairing multilateral forums (such as the G20) positioned it well to break the diplomatic deadlock on Myanmar. The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a research tank focused on foreign affairs, claimed that Indonesia's non-megaphone diplomacy in handling the political unrest in Myanmar actually enhances hopes for its ASEAN chairmanship (Shofa, 2023). Besides, an article published by the Straits Times argued that Indonesia is well-positioned to spearhead efforts to address Myanmar's problems because of its special status as a founding member of ASEAN, its background as a flourishing democracy, its longstanding role as a mediator, and its commitment to democracy, becoming a compelling example of the country's capacity to promote constructive change in the region (Hamid, 2024; Siborutorop, 2024). It is not only news articles that discuss the expectation of Indonesia's chairmanship, but also journal articles do the same. Julina (2023) claimed that Indonesia will play a strategic role as a driver of peace and prosperity as the Chair of ASEAN 2023. She added that by integrating aspects of identity and understanding of collective identity and ASEAN's interests, not just Indonesia's, it will benefit the regional and global community and turn the ASEAN region into a global engine of sustainable growth. Likewise, the official in MoFA Indonesia believed that Indonesia will take efforts in the cooperation with both neighbors and significant nations in settling the Myanmar issue, as well as the backing of international organizations to facilitate the application of the Five Point Consensus (5PC) (Ayudiana, 2023). Moreover, other literature also argued that Indonesia will take on a role of dialogue due to its capacity and experience in managing conflict and dedication to human rights and democracy (Ain and Wulandari, 2023; Gunawan, 2024: 98-99).

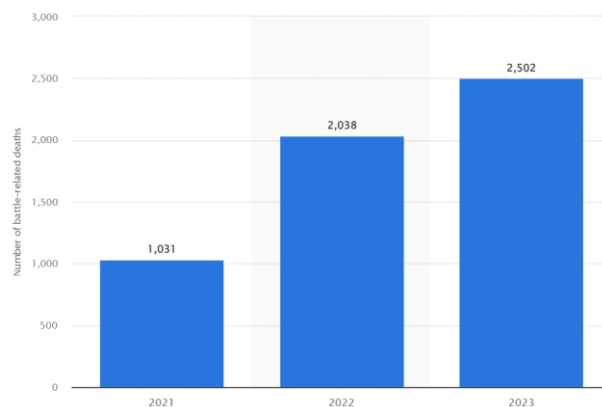
Throughout its chairmanship, Indonesia launched various efforts, including shuttle diplomacy, assigning special envoys, and communication (Septiari, 2021; Bauchner, 2023; Strangio (c), 2023). Despite these efforts, the violence in Myanmar continued to escalate, and the junta showed little sign of compliance. With more than 180 contacts with Myanmar's multi-stakeholders, including the military junta, Indonesia has asserted that it is making a serious effort to bring the warring groups together and advance the 5PC, which is calling for an immediate end to the violence and inclusive talks that involve "all parties" to the conflict (Strangio (c), 2023). However, amid many efforts conducted by Indonesia, Myanmar's conflict has escalated during its chairmanship (see Figure 1 and Figure 2). From 2021 to 2024, mass killings in Myanmar have increased from 113 to 466. Furthermore, the number of battle-related deaths in Myanmar has gradually increased from 1,031 in 2021 to 2,502 in 2023. Amid many efforts that have been done by Indonesia during its chairmanship, these data raise a central research question: why does Indonesia have a dilemmatic position in Myanmar's conflict during its 2023 ASEAN chairmanship?. It aims to comprehensively understand the challenges faced by Indonesia during its chairmanship.

Figure 1. Mass Killing in Myanmar (2021-2022)



Source: Radio Free Asia, 2024

Figure 2. Number of battle-related deaths in Myanmar from 2021 to 2023



Source: Statista, 2025

Method

This research uses a qualitative method. It is a flexible and iterative method that involves collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data together in order to generate rich and detailed descriptions of social phenomena. The refinement of the focus and the exploration of emerging themes are allowed to take place (Ravitch and Carl, 2019: 45). The five characteristics separate qualitative research, including its specialized varieties, from other forms of social science research (Yin, 2015: 9). First, this research investigates the significance of people's lives in their real-world positions. Second, it presents the ideas and perspectives of persons in the research. Third, it explicitly adheres to and accounts for real-world contextual conditions. Fourth, it contributes to insights from current or new concepts that might assist in explaining social behavior and thought. At last, it recognizes the possible importance of numerous sources of information rather than relying just on one. This method emphasizes the importance of context, diverse perspectives, and the iterative nature of data analysis to enhance our understanding of social behavior and thought. By embracing these characteristics, qualitative research not

only enriches academic discourse but also provides meaningful insights that reflect the realities of individuals' lives. The author will collect data and analyze the behavior of Indonesia in case of Myanmar's conflict during its 2023 chairmanship in order to provide meaningful insight. Furthermore, there are three steps on how to use Stag Hunt and rational choice in the discussion section. First, in the beginning of this section, the author will discuss several scenarios in Indonesia's relationship with other international actors during its chairmanship in 2023. Second, Stag Hunt will give the score of Indonesia's relationship with other actors and discuss the motivations of them. Last, at the end of the discussion part, the author interprets the finding based on the analysis.

Theoretical Framework

This research uses Stag Hunt as game theory in International Relations (IR) and the concept of rational choice to analyze why Indonesia could not de-escalate Myanmar's conflict. In the context of IR, Stag Hunt can be used to explain a variety of behaviors, such as states decisions to go to war, their participation in international organizations, and their use of economic sanctions. It is a tale that was turned into a game in which social compact is represented by the game. In a "Discourse on Inequality" quoted by Skyrms, Rousseau briefly recounts the tale that everyone understood that he had to stay at his station if he was hunting a stag, but if a hare happened to pass by one of them, there is no question that he would have pursued it without hesitation (Skyrms, 2004: 1). The only options available to the hunters are hare and stag. There is always a chance of getting a hare, no matter what other people do. Even though there is no chance of bagging a stag on one's own, as the number of hunters rises, so does the likelihood of a successful stag hunt. A hare is worth a lot less than a stag. The next phase of the interaction is what is now known as a "stag hunt. Besides, rational choice is one of the primary techniques for the post-war study of IR. It assumes that states are the primary actors in IR and that their decisions are driven by their desire to achieve their national interests. It has improved understanding of topics like the effects of anarchy and the possibility of cooperation and helped to frame theoretical conversations about international politics (Snidal, 2013: 85). It will help Stag Hunt to analyze the rationale for the choice of Indonesia in the case of Myanmar's conflict.

Furthermore, the sensible decision made by one player in the Stag Hunt depends on his expectations of the other player's decision and comparison for social collaboration (see Figure 1). Hunting for stag and hares both reach equilibrium. Each participant must make a decision without knowing what the other person will do. A hunter needs his partner's cooperation in order to successfully pursue a stag. A hare can be obtained on one's own, but they are less valuable than stags. When a player decides to go stag hunting, they run the danger of their opponent not going along with them. When a player decides to hunt hare, there is no danger involved because his reward is independent of the other player's decision, but he forfeits the reward that could come from a successful stag hunt (Skyrms, 2004: 32). Table 1 shows the payoff matrix of stag hunt. First, both players cooperate to hunt a stag and get 20 for both of them. Second, one of them will get 10 or 0 if the other decides to choose stag or hare. Third, both players will get 10 if they choose hare. In this scenario, the rational choice of player depends on the other player's behavior. They will choose stag if the other player chooses the same. Choosing hare is a rational choice because of the uncertainty of the choice of all players.

Figure 1. Stag Hunt Payoffs

	Stag	Hare
Stag	3,3	0,2
Hare	2,0	2,2

Source: Heifetz, 2012: 139

Results and Discussion

The Brief History of Myanmar's Conflict

The government of Myanmar has faced several allegations of human rights abuses towards ethnic minority groups, including forced labor, displacement, and violence, for many years (Ekeh and Smith, 2007:1–5). Since independence, several ethnic insurgencies have gained prominence in Myanmar (Cline, 2009: 574). Most ethnic groups have armed opposition movements that are fighting for autonomy or total independence from the central government. The violence has caused mass displacement and suffering. The conflict has ravaged the lives of millions for years due to violence and displacement. Of all the salient and controversial features of ethnic conflict in Myanmar, few have attained as much international recognition as the treatment afforded to the Rohingya, a Muslim ethnic minority that has borne the full brunt of persecution and violence both at the hands of military power and at the hands of radical Buddhist nationalists (Mohajan, 2018: 1). One such example of forced displacement and violation of the rights of the Rohingya was in the year 2017, when the military campaign had reached an intensity such that by the end of the year, there had been thousands killed and hundreds of thousands more displaced (Mahmood et al., 2017, pp. 1841-1850). This ethnic group couldn't get citizenship in Myanmar and thus has been deprived of citizen rights since 1982. The UN has given the status of refugees to 82,000 Rohingya, giving them limited legal protection. More than 159,000 people have fled Myanmar by rickety boats that have been bound for neighbouring countries in only a few weeks, where hundreds have drowned.

The constitution of Myanmar acknowledges eight ethnic groups as 'national races', which consist of the Bamar or Burmans, Chin, Karen and its Kayah tribes, Mon, Kachin, Shan, and Rakhine or Arakanese (Holliday, 2014:410). It offers certain provisions and rights to these ethnic groups, including cultural and linguistic rights. However, these eight indigenous peoples are married to many other ethnic groups in Myanmar who do not have constitutional recognition. These people suffer oppression and bigotry in various forms, such as a relative lack of access to services such as health care and education. Following the coup of 1982, the state has pursued a policy of prejudice and exclusion towards ethnic minorities by restricting their legal rights (Kramer 2010:51).

The 2021 Coup d'état

Even though 2015's general election successfully elected Aung San Suu Kyi as the president of Myanmar in democratic terms after nearly three decades of repression, the military regime tacked down her government and NLD leaders and refused a stunning victory for the National League for Democracy in that election (Ladd, 2022:1). On February 1, 2021, the National League for Democracy (NLD) and its leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, led the democratically elected government of Myanmar, which was overthrown by the military, commonly known as the Tatmadaw (Bhattacharya and Raghuvanshil, 2021:31). In response to alleged irregularities in the 2020 general election, which the NLD had easily won, the military proclaimed a state of emergency and detained Suu Kyi and other top NLD officials.

During COVID-19, the coup was widely condemned by various world leaders because severe damage was done to this pandemic response while the escalation of violence was continued by the regime (Rocha et al., 2021:1). In his first few months, President Joe Biden imposed new sanctions on Myanmar (Drezner, 2021: 142). The 2021 crisis also made the European Union impose sanctions on Myanmar for 9 individuals and 7 entities (European Council, 2023). The UN Security Council adopted UN Resolution 2669 in order to respond to the situation in Myanmar, which is supported by 15 member organs, except China, Russia, and India (United Nations, 2022). Myanmar had to focus on the health and safety of people, but the solidarity was unsuccessfully achieved. To support Myanmar's situation, on 24 April 2021, ASEAN held an emergency summit by calling out all of the ASEAN leaders and the new de facto Myanmar military leader, Min Aung Hlaing (Rocha et al., 2021:1). Those mean that there are regional and international responses that the world and ASEAN leaders see the conflict and COVID-19 in Myanmar need to solve. Recently, the conflict has resulted in the death of 466 people in 2024 (reported on October 25), which has increased gradually from 2021 to 2024 (Radio Free Asia, 2024).

ASEAN's Role in Myanmar's Conflict

On April 20, 2021, ASEAN agreed to a 5PC represented in the joint statement of the ASEAN leaders and accepted by Myanmar. It was reached to address the problem that still exists in Myanmar, where the military ousted the government and detained elected officials, including Aung San Suu Kyi (Sri Munir Majid, 2022:5). It provided five steps that ASEAN would take in order to facilitate a peaceful resolution to the crisis in Myanmar and includes initiating dialogue with the immediate cessation of violence between all parties in Myanmar, assigning a special envoy from ASEAN assigned to facilitate the process of dialogue, providing humanitarian assistance to the people of Myanmar, deploying ASEAN observers into the area in order to monitor the situation on the ground, and creating a constructive and positive relationship between all parties involved in the crisis (ASEAN, 2021). However, a year later, Myanmar has not implemented or complied with the agreement that it agreed to (Nadi, 2023).

On its leadership in ASEAN, Brunei held a special summit for addressing Myanmar's conflict on 24 April 2021 (ASEAN, 2021). It opened a great opportunity for ASEAN to express commitment toward the resolution of the crisis in Myanmar and to impress on the need to strive toward a peaceful resolution of the conflict. At this summit, ASEAN leaders have called for an immediate cessation of violence in Myanmar and emphasized the need for a peaceful resolution and restoration of democracy following the military coup. This collective stance marks a significant shift in ASEAN's approach, reflecting growing international concern over the humanitarian crisis and human rights violations in the region (Allard, 2021). Furthermore, the appointment of Erywan Yusof as ASEAN's special envoy to Myanmar highlights the ongoing challenges in diplomatic engagement,

particularly as the junta's refusal to grant access to key leaders undermines efforts for dialogue and resolution (Human Rights Watch, 2022).

Like Brunei, Cambodia's chairmanship was dynamic in facing Myanmar's conflict. As the chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2022, Cambodia was urged to address a host of challenges, such as the pandemic, economic troubles, the Taiwan Strait crisis, the Russia-Ukraine war, and the civil war in Myanmar (Vun & Rim, 2023). After Indonesian President Joko Widodo first urged for the junta to be banned from important ASEAN events, Cambodia decided to reject Myanmar's invitation (Detsch, 2022). It is also a U-turn for the Cambodian government, which has long had a propensity for China and had pushed earlier this year for the involvement of the junta in defense discussions. Despite the deteriorating situation in Myanmar, ASEAN came under fire at its summit conference earlier this month in Cambodia for failing to take effective action to bar all junta officials from the group's meetings.

Following Aung San Suu Kyi's de facto ouster and transfer to prison last week, Prak Sokhonn, the Cambodian Foreign Minister, has requested Myanmar's military administration to reinstate house arrest for the former de facto leader (Turton, 2022). Hun Sen, the prime minister of Cambodia, announced yesterday that he has proposed Prak Sokhonn, the foreign minister of his nation, as the next ASEAN special envoy to Myanmar. In a letter to Wunna Maung Lwin, the foreign minister chosen by Cambodia for ASEAN envoy, Sokhonn expressed his disappointment about the detention of Aung San Suu Kyi and international perception about democratization in Myanmar. At the release of a new hotel in Phnom Penh, the leader of Cambodia made the statement and then defended his choice to negotiate with the junta that has ruled Myanmar since it seized power in February (Strangio (a), 2021).

The Role of China, Russia and US in Myanmar's conflict

Head of IR Department CSIS, China strategically becomes an external partner of ASEAN in solving Myanmar's crisis because it can increase and give pressure to the Junta (Ayudiana, 2023). Even though China is one of the primary actors in supporting Myanmar, China is carefully involved in Southeast Asia because it does not want to break down its relations with this region. In leadership of Indonesia as chair of ASEAN, Myanmar was not invited to the ASEAN Summit in Labuan Bajo. China gave support to Myanmar by visiting Myanmar. China stated that it encouraged Myanmar to choose its own course for development. Beijing's backing was demonstrated by Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang's trip to Myanmar. This support manifested itself when the Myanmar military junta was once again declined entry to the ASEAN summit, which will be held in Indonesia from May 9 to 12, 2023 (Romana, 2023).

Like China, Russia has a bargaining position in Myanmar's conflict. The United States of America (US) believes that the civil war in Myanmar will end if Russia ised because Russia supports weapons to Myanmar (Tempo.Co (a), 2023). Myanmar bought six Su-Combat planes in the first quarter of 2018. It has a chance to become the primary fighter for the Myanmar Air Force should there be additional orders for this plane in the future. The aircraft are anticipated to aid Myanmar in its internal problems and elevate its air force above that of Bangladesh and Thailand, two nearby countries. (Gorenburg and Schwartz, 2019: 28).

Furthermore, the US put its strategic position in Myanmar's conflict. Alongside the UK, Japan, and Australia, the US condemns the junta for the coup because Washington viewed that the regime's push for elections could create instability (Ratcliffe, 2023). An

article published by The Diplomat explains that the assistance outlined in the US Burma Act should not be seen as a one-time effort but as the first step in laying the groundwork for political engagement between the National Unity Government (NUG) and Exile, Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs), and the US government, because it will create a strong foundation for the progressive expansion of future support for Myanmar's pro-democratic movement (Hein, 2023). These responses are important to convince the public that the US is an important actor in Myanmar's conflict.

Indonesia's chairmanship of ASEAN in 2023

Indonesia took over the ASEAN chairmanship in 2023, having historically served in this position in 1976, 2003, and 2011 (The Jakarta Post (a), 2022). Many parties at the time believed that Indonesia was doing well in chairing because ASEAN agendas are continuous from Indonesia's position and leadership right after it wraps up its term as the president of the Group of 20 (The Jakarta Post (c), 2023). During this pronouncement in late 2022, President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo stated in Phnom Penh that the theme "ASEAN Matters: Epicentrum of Growth" signifies the relevance of ASEAN and the challenge that has to be faced through their joint efforts (Sekretariat Kabinet, 2022; Tempo.Co (b), 2023). During its chairmanship, Indonesia has also vowed and published policies to face Myanmar's conflict. Quiet diplomacy by Foreign Minister Retno LP Marsudi, ASEAN's special envoy to Myanmar, reflects a strategic choice in the context of building trust across a complex diplomatic landscape, though questions remain as to how far this silence will effectively deal with the ongoing crisis (The Jakarta Post (b), 2023). Indonesia has claimed that the country is seriously striving to bring the warring groups around the table, advancing the 5PC by making more than 180 contacts with multi-stakeholders in Myanmar, including the military junta, seeking an immediate cessation of violence and inclusive discussions that include "all parties" to the conflict (Strangio (c), 2023).

Before becoming a chair of ASEAN, Indonesia made three important efforts to push Myanmar's junta. In order to demand a concerted response to the violence, Indonesia has engaged in "shuttle diplomacy." The minister of foreign affairs, Retno Marsudi, visited Brunei, Singapore, and Thailand to ask for help in his initiatives to encourage a democratic transition in Myanmar (Septiari, 2021). Second, an article from Reuters provided information regarding Indonesian efforts to persuade ASEAN to play a more active role in addressing the political crisis in Myanmar (Strangio (b), 2021). Third, at the G-20 summit, Indonesia and Indonesia discussed the development of Myanmar's crisis, but this effort was not continued by a concrete plan for action (Indonesia.go.id, 2022).

During its chairmanship, Indonesia has organized the 32nd ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC) Meeting, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat, and the 42nd ASEAN Summit. Based on the ASEAN Press Statement, the 32nd ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC) Meeting and ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat only resulted in the statement of ASEAN responding to the situation in Myanmar without planning for concrete action (ASEAN, 2023). Besides, the 2023 ASEAN Summit result could not explain the plan for action in responding to the situation in Myanmar. The leaders of ASEAN only condemned the attack on the regional humanitarian aid team (AHA) Center and the ASEAN Oversight Team in Hseng Township, Shan State, northern Myanmar, and pushed Myanmar's compliance with the 5PC (Kementerian Kominfo, 2023). In an effort to demonstrate to Myanmar's junta officials how Indonesia accomplished a smooth transition to democracy, Indonesia intends to send a senior general to that country, even though (Lamb, Suroyo, & Teresia, 2023).

Based on that data, this research aims to explain the rational choice of Indonesia in facing Myanmar's conflict during its chairmanship in 2023. This topic is relevant due to the increase in the casualties caused by this conflict. During the chairmanship of Brunei, ASEAN established the 5PC and assigned an ASEAN envoy for dialogue, though the junta did not allow the envoy to meet all parties in Myanmar. Subsequently, during its chairmanship, Cambodia has conducted negotiations with ASEAN members, but there was no significant change to Myanmar. Third, in the early years of its chairmanship, Indonesia was believed to make significant changes to Myanmar; however, the death toll of that conflict has increased until 2024 (Irrawaddy, 2024). Indonesia's chairmanship of ASEAN in 2023 underlines its pivotal role in trying to address the Myanmar crisis through diplomatic engagement and significant international dialogue toward regional conflicts (Gunawan, 2024: 98-99). Indonesia started to use "quiet diplomacy" in the early stages of its leadership in ASEAN because it aimed to give trust to all parties (France 24, 2023). But Indonesia did not invite Myanmar to the 42nd ASEAN Summit while it aims to give trust to all parties (Sekretariat Kabinet (b), 2023). Even though Laos is the chair of ASEAN in 2024, the inquiry into Indonesia's behavior during its chairmanship is relevant due to its capacity and power in Southeast Asia. Thus, this research will analyze Indonesia's rational choice in facing Myanmar's conflict during its 2023 ASEAN chairmanship.

Indonesia and the other actor are analogized as two hunters because this game is multi-person interactions (Skyrms, 2004: 38). Both hunters do not know their actions toward each other. The hunters have to choose between stags and hares. One hunter has to make sure that the other wants to hunt Stag, because there is a risk if the other does not do so. They can catch the stag if they cooperate with each other. In this game, the hunter cannot catch it alone. If the hunters do not want to take a risk, they can catch the hares because of less effort and time. The hunter has to choose carefully to maximize the benefit based on a dilemmatic decision. Eventually, this part will analyze how Indonesia's rational choice in facing Myanmar's conflict during its 2023 ASEAN chairmanship is by using the perspective of a hunter in a hunting stag or deer to understand dilemmatic options on each maneuver.

During the chairmanship of Cambodia, President Joko Widodo first urged the junta to be banned from important ASEAN events (Detsch, 2022). It happened after some people criticized Brunei for its lack of a strong response to the crisis, especially when compared to other regional and global actors (Anadolu Agency, 2021). Based on data in the background, Myanmar is yet to follow the 5PC, which aims to foster a peaceful resolution to the crisis in Myanmar by promoting dialogue, ensuring humanitarian support, and establishing monitoring mechanisms, thereby encouraging constructive relationships among all parties involved (ASEAN, 2021). Myanmar's conflict has been raised, as shown by the increase in death toll in 2023 (Free Radio Asia, 2024). Before its chairmanship, Indonesia had built communication and dialogue with other ASEAN members to push Myanmar into implementing that consensus.

Discussion

a. Indonesia and Myanmar

During its chairmanship, there are several efforts made by Indonesia related to Myanmar's conflict. First, Indonesia's proactive and extensive engagement during its ASEAN chairmanship has underscored its commitment to resolving the ongoing crisis in

Myanmar, emphasizing the importance of the 5PC as a guiding framework, even though the collaborative efforts of ASEAN member states have faced challenges in fostering dialogue and humanitarian support for the people of Myanmar (Kurmala, ed. 2023; Siborutorop, 2024). Second, to facilitate communication with the junta, Indonesia established a special envoy's office led by Foreign Minister Marsudi instead of assigning a single person as special envoy to Myanmar (Bauchner, 2023). Subsequently, the ASEAN summit underscores the urgent need for unity and decisive action among member states in response to the escalating violence in Myanmar, particularly following the recent attack on a humanitarian convoy. As leaders call for the implementation of the 5PC, the effectiveness of ASEAN's collective response will be crucial in addressing the ongoing crisis and fostering stability in the region (Syamsudin, 2023). Last, Indonesia is a key player in the effort to find solutions to the Myanmar issue as the 2023 ASEAN chair nation. Indonesia, which has a wealth of diplomatic expertise and a dedication to democracy and human rights, has worked to promote communication and collaboration between Myanmar and the global community. As previously stated, Indonesia has organized special summits and gatherings to encourage communication and the development of agreement amongst Myanmar's disputing parties. The 13th ASEAN-United Nations (UN) Summit, the 20th ASEAN-India Summit, the 45th ASEAN-Canada Summit, and the 3rd ASEAN-Australia Summit are among them (Gunawan, 2024: 98-99).

However, amid many efforts, there are contrasting realities during Indonesia's chairmanship. At the ASEAN Summit in 2023, no officials of the government or members of Myanmar's junta were invited, because many ASEAN member states view the junta as a party that has impeded regional peace (Rakhmat and Purnama (a), 2023). Despite more than 180 meetings with various parties in Myanmar, there are still doubts emerging, with the view that ASEAN talks more than it acts. This consensus, aimed at addressing the crisis in Myanmar, including stopping violence and facilitating dialogue between parties, appears yet unable to produce concrete progress (Velasco, 2023: 245; Karim et al., 2023). Besides, Myanmar has refused to cooperate with other countries, particularly in humanitarian assistance. In addition to pushing Myanmar to comply with the 5PC, the ASEAN leaders only denounced the attack on the ASEAN Oversight Team and the regional humanitarian aid team (AHA Center) in Hseng Township, Shan State, northern Myanmar (Kementerian Kominfo, 2023). Moreover, Human Rights Watch claimed that the first quarter of Indonesia's chairmanship has failed because Indonesia was not able to push the junta to implement 5PC (Bauchner, 2023). Even worse, the research published by Rosyidin (2023) claimed that Indonesia's multilateral diplomacy is dominated by pragmatism and short-term interest and not solving international disputes. Thus, the cooperation between Indonesia and Myanmar to get a stag is not achieved because all players want a hare. Even though Indonesia has failed to de-escalate the conflict, it still has a credit due to the pragmatism of its diplomacy and other domestic and international interests.

b. Indonesia and ASEAN members

Even though some countries in Southeast Asia have ASEAN as a regional organization, the fiction happens in the case of Myanmar. Indonesia has to pay attention to the other ASEAN members (several members of ASEAN) who did not fully support the 5PC in dealing with Myanmar because they conducted an informal meeting with junta officials. There is a risk if Indonesia focuses on the consolidation of ASEAN's members under the 5PC. Because there is no guarantee that all members follow it on their way. Indonesia could not run partially for getting Stag by letting the other hunter (some ASEAN members) with their perspective. It would be hard for Indonesia to get a stag because the

other only wanted a hare (some member conducted an informal meeting with Junta). The 5PC could not be followed by Myanmar if there was no consolidation and cooperation among members. Based on Brunei and Cambodia's experiences as chairs of ASEAN, the implementation of this consensus was hard. Indonesia should learn from their experience that this consensus will be a long journey for ASEAN so that it does not take a risk by only focusing on the 5PC. In the case of Thailand, it engaged with Myanmar in the Track 1.5 Dialogue, which highlights a strategic maneuver to sideline ASEAN, providing the junta with a more advantageous international platform, while other ASEAN members (Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines) refused to join with Thailand (Nyein, Kaung, 2023; Reuters, 2023). The implementation of the 5PC is hard for ASEAN members (Robinson, 2023). Furthermore, as chair of ASEAN, Indonesia conducted quiet diplomacy to build trust between all members (France 24, 2023). Thus, Indonesia could be a lone wolf in hunting stag if it forces other ASEAN members to take action in Myanmar's conflict, because all members have been polarized by their own interests. In the case of Myanmar, several members viewed Hare as a good object for hunting because it did not break their relationship with China, Russia, and other related countries.

c. Indonesia and the United Nations

In a wider scope, Indonesia has a good relationship with the United Nations, particularly the UN Security Council. Indonesia, along with Germany, South Africa, Belgium, and the Dominican Republic, has been selected as a non-permanent member of the security council for 2019 to 2020 (Kementerian Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2019). In the case of Myanmar, the UN Security Council released UN Resolution 2669 for Myanmar's conflict, though China, India, and Russia did not support this resolution (United Nations, 2022). But Human Rights Watch reported that the UN Security Council's concrete action is needed due to non-compliance, and Indonesia's foreign minister and UN envoy have to convince the UN Security Council about tortures, killings, unlawful arrests, and war crimes conducted by the Junta (Human Rights Watch (a), 2023). In the context of Stag Hunter, Indonesia cannot work alone with the other hunter (UN Security Council). Even though Indonesia has a good relationship with the UN Security Council, there is no guarantee that the United Nations will release concrete action for Myanmar's conflict. In this theory, the stag is more expensive for Indonesia than the hare because the concrete action between Indonesia and the UN Security Council for Myanmar's conflict is a long journey yet.

In reality, the UN has faced challenges in managing Myanmar's conflict. The Special Advisory Council for Myanmar's report underscores the United Nations' systemic failures in addressing the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Myanmar, calling for a decisive shift in strategy that prioritizes collaboration with local civil society and direct humanitarian assistance. As the situation deteriorates, it is imperative for the UN to heed the voices of the Myanmar people and take meaningful action to support their struggle against military oppression (Special Advisory Council for Myanmar, 2023). Besides, the ongoing crisis in Myanmar highlights a critical failure of the UN to fulfill its responsibility to protect, leading to a profound disillusionment among the people who now harbor no expectations of international support. This situation not only undermines the legitimacy of the UN but also poses a significant threat to the credibility of the entire post-World War II international system (Trithart, 2024). Based on the stag hunt theory, the UN could not hunt for stag because the UN has barriers in implementing Responsibility to Protect (R2P) in Myanmar and other political policies. Besides, Indonesia could not play

more without support from the UN due to domestic interest in its diplomacy and other considerations.

d. Indonesia, US and China

The involvement of the US and China is also discussed, but it is seen from the perspective of Indonesia for Myanmar's conflict in relation to them. According to the research written by Dominic Tierney, there is a prospect of a US-China battlefield (proxy war) in Myanmar's conflict compared to the South China Sea (Tierney, 2021:50). That is why the involvement of the US and China is importantly analyzed by this research. Even though major Asian allies and Western nations responded to Russia's invasion of Ukraine within days with harsh sanctions and arms shipments, the international reaction to the vicious military coup that occurred in Myanmar one year ago was weak. However, China has built a good relationship with Myanmar. China's changing diplomatic approach in Myanmar, which is marked by substantial investments and more interaction with the military regime, reflects its larger geopolitical objectives while escalating regional conflicts and humanitarian disasters (East Asia Forum, 2023). In this situation, Indonesia has to maintain good relations with both countries. Based on Indonesia's Free-Active Foreign Policy, Indonesia conducts diplomatic relations with many countries in the world, including the US and China. Since the end of the Cold War, Indonesia has transformed and continually used Free-Active Foreign Policy, though it was different in the Cold War, when Indonesia only navigated in two reefs (Anwar, 2020: 120). Recently, Indonesia's foreign policy has fundamentally changed since President Jokowi took office in October 2014, most visibly in the state's concentration on home concerns rather than global engagement (Rosyidin, 2017: 13).

Like other countries, the United States has conducted several efforts to push Myanmar's junta. It has intensified its sanctions against Myanmar by targeting foreign entities aiding the military junta in procuring jet fuel for airstrikes on civilians, underscoring a commitment to deprive the regime of resources that facilitate its oppressive actions. This move reflects a broader strategy to hold accountable those complicit in the junta's violent repression since the 2021 coup, as the international community seeks to support the people of Myanmar in their struggle for democracy and human rights (Simon Lewis, 2023). Post-2021 coup d'état, the US released the Burma Act. This legislation underscores the importance of U.S. involvement in the ongoing struggle for democracy in Myanmar (Martin, 2023). Additional sanctions were placed on people and organizations associated with the junta by the US, UK, Canada, and EU. The only government organization to yet enforce sanctions on junta-controlled companies was the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE), which was sanctioned by the EU in February (Human Rights Watch (b), 2023).

Based on Stag Hunt, Indonesia, the US, and China hunt a hare hunter because hunting a stag pays the highest price for them. Even though the US condemned and responded to Myanmar's actions by releasing the US Burma Act, concrete action in Myanmar is still needed. The US Burma Act still needs political engagement with the NUG and EAOs as future support for Myanmar's pro-democratic movement. In relation to the US, Indonesia has a big for US movement, but there is no concrete action in the field. Recently, Indonesia cannot speculate that the US will further implement the US Burma Act in the field. It would be safe for Indonesia if the US did not follow up on it by

conducting a concrete action plan. In relation to China, Indonesia also becomes a lonely hunter for a hare because it has strong engagement with Myanmar. Despite the fact that China strategically joins ASEAN as an external partner to resolve the problem in Myanmar, it never shows strong commitment to solving Myanmar's conflict (Ayudiana, 2023). The UN Security Council released Resolution 2669 for the situation in Myanmar, but China did not support it (United Nations, 2022). Indonesia's special envoy to the coup-hit country last month praised Jakarta's more than 180 engagements with stakeholders in Myanmar; however, one analyst said Indonesia's reliance on investment from China, which is Myanmar's biggest trading partner, means Indonesia is too weak and too timid to pressure Myanmar's junta (Idrus, 2023). Furthermore, Indonesia's reliance on China has been more obvious in recent years. Ever since Jokowi took office, there has been a sharp rise in collaboration. Concerns from the public have grown as China collaborations have expanded because Indonesia's economic cooperation is seen as being overly skewed in favor of China. Unquestionably, China is currently Indonesia's biggest investor and trading partner (Rakhmat and Purnama (b), 2023.)

e. Indonesia and Russia

The last analysis is the relation between Indonesia and Russia. In relation to Myanmar, the US believes that Myanmar's conflict will soon end if Russia stops giving weapons to Myanmar (Tempo. Co (a), 2023). The article published by the Jakarta Post in 2023 claimed that Russia is close to the junta (Hutt, 2023). Russia has become closer with Myanmar since the Tatmadaw overthrew the NLD administration in February 2021 and also exported its energy to Myanmar, jumping from almost nothing to 8.36 million barrels of oil (Storey, 2023; Fulcrum, 2023). The deepening alliance between Myanmar and Russia, fueled by the Tatmadaw's coup and the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, underscores a troubling shift in geopolitical dynamics, as Myanmar seeks military and economic support from Moscow to address its internal challenges. This partnership not only exacerbates the conflict within Myanmar but also complicates regional stability, highlighting the potential for increased violence and human rights violations under the junta's rule (Storey, 2023: 9). Besides, Russia abstained from resolution 2669 after the Security Council encouraged caution, the de-escalation of tensions, and the release of all prisoners, and it demanded that all kinds of violence in Myanmar cease immediately (United Nations, 2022). Furthermore, according to a UN expert, Myanmar has imported \$1 billion worth of weapons since the coup, primarily from China and Russia (Chen, 2023).

In relation to Indonesia, Russia has a significant economic partnership with Indonesia. Bilateral trade reached a new high of 4.8 billion US dollars by the end of 2022, up 44.8 percent. Russia buys Indonesian palm oil without any problems. Russia, on the other hand, is prepared to expand its exports of food items, particularly grains, fertilizer, oil, and petroleum products (Vorobieva, 2023). Even though Indonesia has a good relationship with Russia, it faced a dilemmatic position in regard to Myanmar's conflict because of Russia's support towards Myanmar's junta, such as military supplies. Based on Stag Hunt, it would be hard for Russia to become a hunter for stag if it did not support democratic government and peace in Myanmar. The hare is a possible choice for Indonesia because of less effort and time and not threatening its national interest with Russia.

Based on the analysis above, Table 2 shows that all actors (Indonesia, Myanmar, the UN, the US, China, and Russia) choose hare (2, 2). It means that Indonesia and other actors are not sure that they are able to cooperate together in resolving Myanmar's conflict. For Indonesia, it was risky for Indonesia to make a significant policy to push the junta to obey

a 5PC and stop violence. In its relationship with ASEAN, the friction among members has resulted in distrust, even though they will get (3, 3) if Indonesia and other ASEAN members are solid in using 5PC in their relationship with Myanmar. Besides, Indonesia cannot speculate about getting stag (0.2) while other actors do so (0.2). This option is hard because both Indonesia and other actors have to make sure that all agree on the stage. Even though Indonesia has conducted several efforts during its 2023 chairmanship, they have become pragmatic actions to balance its relations among polarizations. Because Indonesia did not really want to make a forceful decision for this case during its chairmanship. Moreover, pragmatic and short-term diplomatic interests seem to be a reason for Indonesia. Whereas, ideally, Indonesia has to collaborate with many actors in implementing 5PC, such as with China, Russia, India, and the UN, and involve locals, ethnic minorities, and other social groups in Myanmar (Aji and Ningsih, 2023: 48; Kevin, Widiatmo, and Wardani, 2023).

From this case, the lesson learned is that Indonesia's role as a middle power in the Indo-Pacific necessitates a commitment to multilateral diplomacy that transcends national interests, positioning the nation as a proactive leader in addressing global challenges. As the country approaches a pivotal governmental transition in 2024, redefining its foreign policy to embrace innovative and collaborative approaches will be essential for enhancing its reputation as a global problem solver and ensuring its national interests align with international cooperation (Rosyidin, 2023: 148). However, in the case of Myanmar's conflict, Indonesia has a dilemmatic position because domestic interest Overall, Indonesia's dilemmatic position in facing Myanmar's conflict during its 2023 ASEAN's chairmanship is influenced by the behavior of other actors, who did not want to take a risk in the case of Myanmar. It has to choose not to depend on cooperation (with ASEAN, the UN, the US, China, and Russia) because there is no guarantee for other actors supporting the same. The US and the UN support democracy and human rights, but they haven't made a strong enough choice to back Indonesia in handling this dispute. However, because Indonesia is dependent on China and Russia, it did not completely disrupt their interests.

Tabel 2. Stag-hunt Payoff Matrix

		Other actors	
		Stag	Hare
Indonesia	Stag	3, 3	0, 2
	Hare	2, 0	2, 2

Source: Author

Conclusion

By using Free-Active Foreign Policy, Indonesia has become a strategic leader in relation to Myanmar, ASEAN, the UN, the US, China, and Russia; however, its 2023 chairmanship of ASEAN limited its capacity due to dilemmatic options in relationships

with other actors. First, Indonesia cannot take a risk for Myanmar's movement if it uses an envoy to influence Myanmar into implementing the 5PC. Based on Brunei's and Cambodia's experiences, it would be expensive for Indonesia to do that. Second, the other ASEAN members are strategic partners for Indonesia, but the fact that there is a polarization among members in regard to Myanmar's conflict. Third, the UN Security Council and the US are also strategic partners for Indonesia as chair of ASEAN, but there is no concrete action plan in the field, even though these international organizations have released UN Resolution 2669 and the US Burma Act. Fourth, China and Russia are also partners of Indonesia and ASEAN. Neither Russia nor China supported UN Resolution 2669. It means that Indonesia did not want to take a risk hunting the stag because they could not fully support this way. Furthermore, Indonesia's chairmanship of ASEAN has not significantly changed conditions in Myanmar because of the increase of victims, the attack, and the refusal of dialogue from the Junta and 5PC. Furthermore, the chairmanship of Laos has to learn about Brunei, Cambodia, and Indonesia's experience to increase the role of ASEAN in this conflict. Overall, Indonesia's dilemmatic position in facing Myanmar's conflict during its 2023 ASEAN chairmanship is caused by all actors' behavior, which did not want to take a risk in the case of Myanmar. There is no assurance that other actors would support cooperation in resolving Myanmar's conflict. Indonesia must decide not to rely on collaboration (with ASEAN, the UN, the US, China, and Russia) in facing Myanmar's conflict because of distrust of the cooperative responses from the other actors.

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