

## **INDONESIA'S ROLE IN ACHIEVING PEACE IN AFGHANISTAN POST-DOHA AGREEMENT (2020)**

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### **ABSTRAK**

Indonesia telah memainkan peran penting dalam mendukung upaya perdamaian di Afghanistan setelah Perjanjian Doha tahun 2020, yang merupakan langkah signifikan menuju stabilitas jangka panjang di negara yang dilanda konflik tersebut. Melalui pendekatan liberalisme, Indonesia berperan sebagai mediator dalam dialog antara Taliban dan pemerintah Afghanistan, serta aktif memberikan bantuan pembangunan dan mendukung proses rekonsiliasi politik. Prioritas Indonesia adalah memastikan penduduk Afghanistan dapat menikmati perdamaian, kesejahteraan, dan hak-hak mereka. Indonesia juga menekankan prinsip Afghan-owned dan Afghan-led, yang berarti Afghanistan harus menentukan masa depannya sendiri tanpa campur tangan luar. Pendekatan ini mencerminkan komitmen Indonesia terhadap prinsip-prinsip kemandirian nasional dan kedaulatan negara, sambil mendukung upaya internasional untuk memfasilitasi perdamaian dan stabilitas di Afghanistan.

Kata Kunci : Peran Indonesia, Konflik Afghanistan, Perjanjian Doha 2020

### **ABSTRACT**

Indonesia has played a key role in supporting peace efforts in Afghanistan following the 2020 Doha Agreement, a significant step towards long-term stability in the conflict-stricken country. Through a liberalism approach, Indonesia has acted as a mediator in dialogue between the Taliban and the Afghan government, while actively providing development aid and supporting the political reconciliation process. Indonesia's priority is to ensure that the Afghan people can enjoy peace, prosperity, and their rights. Indonesia also emphasises the principles of Afghan-owned and Afghan-led, meaning that Afghanistan should determine its future without external interference. This approach reflects Indonesia's commitment to the principles of national independence and state sovereignty while supporting international efforts to facilitate peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Keywords: Indonesia's Role, Afghan Conflict, 2020 Doha Agreement

### **INTRODUCTION**

The prolonged conflict that has taken place in Afghanistan is a series of violent conflicts and extremism that have persisted since 1978. This has led to a delay in the advancement and stability of national security in Afghanistan. The Afghanistan War began with the Soviet Union's intervention in 1979 when they sent troops to Afghanistan. During that time, Afghanistan was led by Hafidzullah Amin from the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). Afghanistan's political stability gained international attention after its affiliation with the Al-Qaeda group was revealed. This was due to Al-Qaeda's hijacking of civilian planes, crashing them into the World Trade Centre (WTC) on September 20, 2001, US President George W. Bush demanded that the Taliban hand over Al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden, who was hiding in Afghanistan.

However, the Taliban refused, prompting the US to launch a military operation in Afghanistan in October 2001 to destroy both Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Two months after the US military operation in Afghanistan, on December 5, 2001, the US succeeded in expelling Al-Qaeda from Afghanistan and overthrowing the Taliban regime in the country, with the latter fleeing through Kandahar to Pakistan (BBC, 2020).

The US military operation in Afghanistan received support from the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), which issued Resolution 1378 calling for the eradication of terrorism, condemning the Taliban for aiding Al-Qaeda and supporting the Afghan people in overthrowing the Taliban regime. This resolution led the UN to invite Afghan political opposition factions such as the Afghan Northern Alliance, Rome Group, Cypress Group, and the Peshawar Group to the Bonn Conference on December 5, 2001, in Bonn, Germany, to discuss the reconstruction of Afghanistan (Auerswald, 2014).

The Bonn Conference produced the Bonn Agreement, which announced the establishment of an interim Afghan government led by Hamid Karzai as Head of the Interim Administration. The agreement mandated the Loya Jirga, which established a transitional government for 18 months, along with human rights enforcement and guaranteeing elections for the Afghan people. Following this, the US and its coalition succeeded in capturing Kandahar, the Taliban's power base, marking the end of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.

Although expelled and driven out of Kabul, the Taliban continued to resist the new Afghan government forces and the international coalition. In 2006, the Taliban carried out acts of violence such as kidnappings, suicide bombings, armed attacks, and the use of land mines, resulting in 669 civilian casualties and the destruction of public facilities.

Since the escalation in 2006, various efforts to end the conflict and promote peace in Afghanistan have been made. This includes the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the US and the Taliban on February 29, 2020, signed in Doha, Qatar. The agreement was witnessed by foreign ministers from Qatar, the US, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Norway, Turkey, Oman, Pakistan, and Indonesia. The agreement covers four key components (Willi, 2021):

1. Promoting counter- terrorism efforts
2. The withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan
3. Intra-Afghan negotiations
4. A permanent and comprehensive ceasefire.

At the same time, a joint declaration was made by the Afghan government and the US in Kabul, agreeing to support the peace agreement between Afghanistan and the US. In its efforts, Indonesia successfully facilitated a Trilateral Meeting between Indonesia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. The meeting resulted in an agreement to prioritise peace and

conflict resolution, particularly between the Afghan government and the Taliban (Mensesneg, 2021).

To support peace efforts in Afghanistan, Indonesia implemented a capacity-building policy in Afghanistan, including the construction of the Indonesian Islamic Centre, which provided access to healthcare and education. The Indonesian government also cooperated with educational institutions in Indonesia to provide scholarships for Afghan students to study in Indonesia. Indonesia's active role in supporting peace in Afghanistan has been widely supported. However, the conflict between Afghanistan and the Taliban underwent a significant shift in 2020, when the US and the Taliban engaged in peace negotiations. This led to rapid political and security changes in Afghanistan in 2021. In May 2021, the US and NATO withdrew military personnel from Afghanistan (International Crisis Group). This change in the political landscape in Afghanistan raises questions about the continuation of Indonesia's policies in supporting peace in Afghanistan, which is why this research is titled "**Indonesia's Role in Achieving Peace in Afghanistan After the 2020 Doha Agreement.**"

### Research Question

How has Indonesia played a role in achieving peace in Afghanistan after the 2020 Doha Agreement?

### Literature Review

**Analysis of Indonesia's Foreign Aid Motives Towards the Crisis in Afghanistan 2020–2021**" by Anggi Koenjaini Putri, Herdrina Nur Alifia, and others in the *Journal Global & Policy*. This research examines Indonesia's response to the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, especially during 2020–2021. The study uses a qualitative descriptive analysis approach with secondary data. The research concludes that Indonesia's foreign aid motives are mainly humanitarian, identity-driven, and ideological. The aid is part of Indonesia's strategic efforts to mediate and foster peace in Afghanistan.

Indonesia's Efforts and Contributions to the Peace Process in Afghanistan through Peacebuilding. This paper, published in the *Mukadimah Journal of Education, History, and Social Sciences*, was authored by Robi Sugara. It discusses Indonesia's efforts and contributions to the peace process in Afghanistan. It focuses on Indonesia's peacebuilding policies, explaining that Indonesia has long been committed to supporting peace in Afghanistan, helping the country become safe, prosperous, and democratic. This includes bilateral support to Afghanistan and through third-party organisations in areas such as democracy, education, health, economics, agriculture, and other forms of development. This also includes scholarship programmes for Afghan government officials and communities. Indonesia's efforts are in line with the UN mandate through the UNAMA program, based on UN Security Council resolutions 1662 of 2006, 746 of 2007,

and 1868 of 2009, which show Indonesia's commitment to peace in Afghanistan and its contribution to rebuilding the country.

Analysis of Joko Widodo's Government's Role in Afghanistan's Peace Efforts. This article, written by Ali Noer Zaman and published in the Jurnal Independent, reflects on the Jokowi administration's peace efforts in Afghanistan. It assesses the foreign policy direction under President Joko Widodo, which leans more towards domestic politics compared to previous administrations, particularly that of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. It examines President Jokowi's initiatives in promoting moderate Islam internationally and supporting peace efforts in Afghanistan.

**Main Argument**

From the national security perspective, stability in Afghanistan directly impacts regional security, including Indonesia, given the threat of terrorism and radicalism that can spread from unstable regions. In terms of economy, peace in Afghanistan opens up new opportunities for Indonesia in trade and investment, capitalizing on more stable conditions to expand markets and foster economic cooperation.

Politically, Indonesia's active role in supporting peace strengthens its diplomatic position on the international stage and enhances its relations with major powers and international organisations. From a cultural perspective, as the largest Muslim-majority country, Indonesia has a moral responsibility to support peace in fellow Muslim countries like Afghanistan, in line with Pancasila's values and its free and active foreign policy principles. This research specifically aims to understand and analyse the sustainability of Indonesia's policy efforts in supporting peace in Afghanistan after the political changes that occurred in the country.

**ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK**

**Liberalism Theory**

Liberalism assumes that all people are good and rational, and because they are rational, they are willing to cooperate to achieve mutual benefit and peace. This view emphasizes the importance of cooperation between nations and introduces the basic premise of liberalism, which is the belief that international relations are cooperative rather than confrontational. This liberal approach recognises that states may be selfish at times, which can lead to competition in various forms. However, the liberal approach suggests that competition makes states realize the importance of cooperation in advancing their interests, and ultimately, states tend to choose cooperative methods over confrontational ones. In addition to the view of the state, liberalism theory has other assumptions. One of these assumptions is that individual freedom should not be restricted. Furthermore, this theory assumes that humans are universal beings and are not limited by state identity. Therefore, individuals interact and cooperate across nations (Jill, Steans, and Lloyd Pettiford, 2009).

The relevance of this theory to the case in this research is that Indonesia’s foreign policy in its efforts to promote peace in Afghanistan aligns with its national goals as outlined in the 1945 Constitution, which seeks to promote world peace. For Afghanistan, Indonesia’s efforts can bring about progress and peace in the country.

**Concept of National Interest**

National interest is one of the most important factors for a country when making decisions in the international system. National interest becomes the key to deciding policy, and it can be defined as the fundamental goal and the final determining factor that guides the decision-makers of a country in conducting its foreign policy. National interest is so important to a state that its realisation becomes a top priority. Hans J. Morgenthau's concept of national interest can be summarised into three parts. First, is the protection of physical identity, meaning the state can maintain the integrity of its territory. Second, is the protection of political identity, which refers to maintaining the political and economic systems. Third, the preservation of its culture, language, and history.

National interest also includes aspects that are integral to the identity of a state, reflecting the focus of the state in realising its national interests and ensuring national continuity. Short-term, medium-term, and long-term plans can be developed from these interests. Indonesia’s role in achieving peace in Afghanistan after the Doha Agreement of 2020 can be analysed based on K.J. Holsti’s concept of national interest, which includes aspects of national security, economy, politics, and cultural values. Post- Doha Agreement, Indonesia has facilitated dialogue between conflicting parties, provided development and humanitarian assistance and played a role in training and capacity-building programmes for the Afghan people, all of which reflect Indonesia’s national interest in creating sustainable peace in the region.

**Concept of the Role of the State**

In the increasingly complex landscape of international relations, the role of the state is central to maintaining global stability and security. Through the principle of sovereignty, states hold the highest authority in managing domestic affairs while maintaining relations with other countries Sinaga, Yuni Arisandy, 2019).

Diplomacy becomes the main tool in advancing national interests by resolving conflicts and building cross-border cooperation. States also play a role in shaping international rules and ensuring compliance with mutually agreed norms. Economic development is a crucial focus, with states collaborating to promote sustainable and fair economic growth. In times of crisis, states must be ready to collaborate in addressing common challenges, be it armed conflict, natural disasters, or humanitarian crises. Thus, the state's role in international relations is not only about safeguarding national interests but also about building global cooperation networks that benefit all of humanity. Role theory in political studies highlights that political behavior is the result of individuals'

role fulfillment within the context of society and the political system. This theory is based on the assumption that most political actions are influenced not only by internal factors such as values, beliefs, or personal motivation but also by the expectations, demands, and hopes placed on individuals by their political and social environment.

The main concept in role theory is that individuals occupying certain positions in the political or social structure have expected or assumed roles to perform. For example, a president is expected to act as a national leader, policy-maker, and symbol of national unity. These expectations and demands shape the role that individuals play, and their behavior can then be understood as a response to these roles (Sorensen,1999).

**Concept of Peace**

The concept of peace is an integral aspect of International Relations, taking into account the complex dynamics between states or between states and non-state actors, which often range from situations of conflict to peace (Sawssan,2019). In this context, it is important to recognize that studies in the field of International Relations cannot be truly complete without considering the peace dimension. The concept of peace in International Relations involves collective efforts to prevent conflicts and promote cooperation among nations around the world. Peace is more than the absence of war; it encompasses various aspects, including diplomacy, international cooperation, respect for international law, and inclusive economic and social development. Moreover, peace also involves education and awareness of the importance of dialogue, tolerance, and intercultural understanding.

By acknowledging the complexities of inter-state interactions, the concept of peace in International Relations emphasises the importance of joint efforts to create a more stable, secure, and prosperous world for all nations and their citizens. Understanding this complexity is vital as it spans a wide spectrum of international interactions, including but not limited to diplomacy, economic competition, multilateral cooperation, conflict resolution, and peacekeeping. This approach provides critical insights into conflict dynamics and ways to manage or resolve tensions that arise between various involved parties.

The concept of peace offers significant contributions to our understanding of the complex dynamics in International Relations, providing a comprehensive framework to analyse, understand, and promote peace in a constantly changing and complex global context. In this regard, Indonesia played an important role in achieving peace in Afghanistan after the 2020 Doha Agreement, adopting an approach aligned with Johan Galtung’s concept of peace. Through multilateral diplomacy, Indonesia can facilitate dialogue between conflicting parties and advocate for sustainable agreements. Additionally, Indonesia’s development assistance can serve as a foundation for long-term stability in Afghanistan, with a focus on key sectors such as infrastructure, education, health, and agriculture. As a mediator, Indonesia can help ensure the implementation of peace agreements and provide support to the parties involved. Moreover, Indonesia can

also advocate for human rights in Afghanistan and strengthen the capacity of institutions and civil society through education and training programs by taking a holistic approach encompassing various aspects of society, Indonesia has significant potential to contribute to lasting peace in Afghanistan.

**RESEARCH METHODS**

This study employs qualitative research methods. The data obtained are descriptive and explain Indonesia’s foreign policy in its peace efforts in Afghanistan from 2020 to 2021. Essentially, qualitative research is aimed at understanding and interpreting phenomena and events experienced by subjects during social interactions, to discover and determine their meanings within that context. (Bakry, 2021).

This research uses descriptive analysis, which involves gathering data and information that correspond to reality to explore Indonesia’s foreign policy in its efforts for peace in Afghanistan. Qualitative research methods involve discussions that focus on the research topic, such as events, phenomena, and occurrences, in the context of relevant data, to show different possibilities and benefits of the research or to present the researcher’s perspective on several cases. This statement indicates that qualitative research ultimately focuses on understanding human behavior and exploring it as the subject of study. In this context, the exploration is based on supporting factors that influence the phenomenon being studied, such as events, activities, phenomena, and even occurrences related to the aim of obtaining answers through observations.

Therefore, in line with the explanation of qualitative research methods, this study produces descriptive data in the form of written material and information gathered by the researcher to gain meaning from the study. This research uses descriptive analysis, which involves gathering data and information that correspond to reality to explore Indonesia’s foreign policy in its efforts for peace in Afghanistan (Sugiyono, 2014).

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In this case, data and information related to the event or phenomenon under study are utilised to support arguments and opinions about the phenomenon. The ability of the researcher to conduct the research, understand all the issues and aspects involved, and other related skills are crucial in this process, and the researcher must be prepared. A qualitative approach requires careful attention to the researcher's skills and capabilities.

The data collection technique in qualitative research is a critical phase, as the goal is to gather data and use it for analysis. The researcher used a data collection technique that included sourcing relevant information to address the research question, such as observing phenomena, interviewing informants, and conducting literature reviews. The researcher also used documentary sources such as journal articles and books. Data were obtained through internet searches from various related organisations, research institutions, and publishers. In this process, the researcher employed two methods:

**library research and document analysis.**

This study utilized library research as a data collection technique. This involved a review of academic works such as journal articles, books, dissertations, internet news articles, and government websites relevant to the research. The sources of these academic writings were selected by the researcher based on their relevance to the research topic, relevance, and validity of the data, and other important factors.

**Data reduction**

The systematic process of searching and compiling data obtained from field notes, interviews, and other sources is known as **data analysis techniques**. This process is conducted so that the data can be easily understood, and the findings can be shared with others. **Qualitative analysis** was used as the data analysis method in this study, involving interactive processes of data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The researcher’s process requires careful attention to various critical points, such as the sources, allows the researcher to decide which phenomena to discuss, which problem statements to challenge, and which data to choose. This process continues throughout the study until the research results are achieved. It is an ongoing analytical process. Thus, the researcher uses data reduction as a technique to ensure the research is more focused.

The final step in the data analysis process is **data validation**. Once the researcher has completed the data collection and ensured that the data align with the field notes and methods used, validation can be carried out. The review process is relatively brief and involves combining the researcher’s perspective, research notes, and what has been done.

**DISCUSSION**

**The Origin of the Afghanistan Conflict**

The prolonged conflict between the Taliban and Afghanistan, supported by the United States and international forces, began with several U.S. military operations following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. These events involved the Al-Qaeda terrorist group and the U.S. government (Ramazan, and Chaman Ali Hikmat, 2024).

In the 9/11 tragedy, Al-Qaeda coordinated an attack on the United States on 11 September 2001, hijacking four U.S. civilian planes. They used these planes as weapons

to attack key American symbols. The first hijacked plane crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center (WTC) in New York City, causing the tower to collapse quickly. The second plane hit the South Tower, also resulting in its collapse. Following political pressure from the U.S., the Taliban government in Afghanistan refused to meet U.S. demands to hand over Al-Qaeda's leader. As a result, the United States and the United Kingdom launched a military operation in Afghanistan on 7 October 2001. They deployed 1,300 troops to attack Taliban military bases and Al-Qaeda training camps. In addition, the U.S. provided \$70 million in aid and full military support to the Northern Alliance, which was operating in various provinces. This assistance was intended to support U.S. and UK efforts in fighting the Taliban government and Al-Qaeda.

After the fall of the Taliban regime, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) issued Resolution 1386 on 20 December 2001. This resolution called on UN member states to contribute troops, military equipment, and other resources to the **International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)**. The establishment of ISAF was made at the request of Hamid Karzai to support security in Afghanistan. ISAF's mission was to carry out reforms and provide operational support to the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP), with the long-term goal of creating professional, independent, and effective defense and security forces throughout Afghanistan.

On 13 October 2003, the UN Security Council issued Resolution 1510 to expand ISAF's operational area from Kabul to the entirety of Afghanistan. Initially, ISAF only operated in the capital city. At the NATO Summit, NATO decided to send its troops to join ISAF in Afghanistan. NATO was later appointed as ISAF's leader at the request of the UN on 11 August 2003. NATO's main mandate in Afghanistan was to maintain security, increase the capabilities of Afghan forces, support the Afghan government, and prevent Afghanistan from becoming a sanctuary for terrorists again. NATO's role became crucial because security in Afghanistan had a direct impact on the security of NATO member states.

### **Indonesia's Efforts to Support Peace through**

Indonesia has strengthened economic cooperation with Afghanistan to support peace. This was done because achieving peace requires a strong economic foundation. Strengthening the economy as a foundation for peace was supported by various parties working with Afghanistan. Indonesia and Afghanistan worked to increase trade relations. In this effort, Indonesia organised the **Trade Expo Indonesia** in 2017 to continue the positive trade relations between Indonesia and Afghanistan, attended by Afghan entrepreneurs in fields such as agriculture, textiles, pharmaceuticals, and manufacturing.

After the event, Indonesia's exports to Afghanistan increased by 24.69%, reaching a total value of \$20.2 million. Commodities exported by Indonesia included pharmaceutical products, household goods, and palm oil. Meanwhile, Afghanistan's exports to Indonesia decreased by 6% to \$29,000 compared to the previous year.

Afghanistan's export commodities included carpets, dried fruits, and grapes. Strengthening economic cooperation, particularly through training such as the **Training on Export-Import Procedure**, could help improve Afghanistan's economic well-being, creating social and political stability necessary to facilitate a sustainable peace process in the country. Additionally, increased economic activity could create opportunities for broader economic integration in the region, in turn, strengthening regional stability and reducing conflict.

### **Indonesia's Efforts to Support Peace Through Education**

To improve human resources in Afghanistan, Indonesia and Afghanistan cooperated in education to support peace. Indonesia and Afghanistan implemented the Afghanistan-Indonesia School Programmed, awarding 10 scholarships to Afghan students in 2018 (Kementerian Pendidikan, 2017).

In addition, Indonesia, through the Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI), awarded 50 scholarships to Afghan students. The two countries also collaborated on the Short Course on Introduction to Islam in Indonesia, a student exchange program that provided education and training on Islam, culture, tolerance, and diversity (Kementerian Agama, 2024). The goal of this program was to enhance the friendship between Indonesia and Afghanistan and to instil peace values using Indonesia's local wisdom. Through education, it was hoped that Afghanistan's younger generation could become agents of change capable of leading the country toward stability and prosperity.

### **Indonesia's Efforts to Fulfill Women's Rights**

In supporting peace in Afghanistan, Indonesia prioritised women's issues as a key focus in peace efforts. This issue was raised because the majority of Afghan women faced significant difficulties in fully obtaining their basic rights. During the Taliban regime, Afghan women generally had no access to education, were trapped in a strongly patriarchal culture, faced abduction and exploitation, and were deprived of full freedom, leading to an extremely difficult life. The new Afghan government, under President Ghani, sought to improve the protection of women's rights in the country, and Indonesia actively supported the realisation of this agenda. Indonesia, through the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KemenPPPA) and the State Secretariat, represented Indonesia in the National Coordination Team of South-South Triangular Cooperation with Germany in July 2019. The cooperation aimed to hold a Workshop on Women's Economic Empowerment through Home Industry in Indonesia: Best Practices for Discussions in Afghanistan attended by Afghan women in Yogyakarta from July to August 2019. During the workshop, participants visited locations such as Sumber Sari Mayudan Village in Sleman and Ngadikusuman Village in Wonosobo to learn about women's economic empowerment practices.

By addressing women's issues, Indonesia demonstrated its commitment to supporting peace in Afghanistan. Indonesia implemented a programme for fulfilling women's rights by providing training in home-based economic industries. Through women's economic empowerment, Afghan women could have more opportunities to participate in their country's economic and social development. Providing skills and knowledge would allow women to play a more active role in society, supporting the peace process and stability in Afghanistan.

On 29 February 2020, the United States representative, Zalmay Khalilzad, and the Taliban leader, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, signed the **Doha Agreement**, marking the end of a nearly 20-year war between the U.S. and the international coalition with the Taliban in Afghanistan. The agreement was attended by several countries, including Qatar, Indonesia, Pakistan, Turkey, India, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. The Doha Agreement reached several key points of consensus:

1. Commitment to preventing Afghanistan from being used as a sanctuary for terrorists threatening U.S. security and its allies.
2. The U.S. commitment to withdraw troops from Afghanistan according to the set timeline.
3. Taliban's agreement to continue negotiations with the Afghan government for a permanent ceasefire, with talks scheduled for 10 March 2020.
4. Agreement to implement a permanent and comprehensive ceasefire between the U.S. and the Taliban.

This agreement brought a significant shift in the Taliban's political strategy, moving away from their previous reliance on military tactics to focusing on diplomacy to strengthen their position on the international stage. For the legitimate Afghan government, the agreement posed challenges in managing internal dynamics and adjusting security strategies to the new regional and international dynamics. The Doha Agreement also influenced international responses to Afghanistan's stability, as countries and international organisations were tasked with responding to the evolving conflict dynamics and facilitating the peace process. It highlighted the importance of peace in Afghanistan for regional and global security and the significant challenges facing international actors in achieving long-term stability in the country.

On 3 September 2020, the Afghan government, under President Ghani, successfully released the last 400 prisoners, part of a total 5,000 prisoners as a prerequisite for intra-Afghan negotiations. Finally, these negotiations took place on 12 September 2020 in Doha, Qatar, involving representatives from the Afghan government, the Taliban, Qatar, the United Nations, the United States, NATO, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the European Union, and countries like Indonesia, Germany, Norway, and Uzbekistan. The meeting aimed to achieve lasting peace in Afghanistan, focusing on a permanent ceasefire, the country's political future, and social equality. In this

agreement, the Taliban agreed to release 1,000 Afghan government soldiers, while the Afghan government agreed to release 5,000 Taliban prisoners.

However, after the intra- Afghan negotiations, the Taliban continued to launch attacks against Afghan security posts. On 17 September 2020, these attacks caused casualties in the eastern province of Nangarhar. Additionally, in the southern province of Uruzgan, Taliban attacks on district centres resulted in the deaths of five government forces members. A few days later, a suicide bombing by the Taliban on 20 September 2020 killed 20 people, most of whom were civilians, and damaged a hospital in Qalat, Zabul province. According to the UNAMA report, between 13 July and 12 November 2020, Afghanistan experienced 10,490 security incidents across its territory.

Despite the signing of the Doha Agreement between the U.S. and the Taliban, Afghanistan's security situation remained unstable. Violence continued throughout the country, despite the delayed intra- Afghan negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban. This instability escalated, leading to significant changes in the country's political landscape. In May 2021, the U.S. and NATO implemented the withdrawal of military forces from Afghanistan, as agreed. The Afghan government under President Ghani faced growing challenges in managing internal security, and the Taliban's resurgence culminated in their recapture of significant territories. On 16 August 2021, a spokesperson for the Taliban, Mohammad Naeem, declared that the Taliban had won the war after 20 years of conflict with the U.S. Naeem stated that the Taliban were now focused on forming a new government and transitioning power peacefully. At the same time, U.S. President Joe Biden expressed no regrets about his decision to end the war with the Taliban in Afghanistan. Biden explained that the fall of Ghani's government and the Afghan forces' failure to resist the Taliban led to the Taliban's return to power. NATO similarly upheld its commitment to withdrawing troops from Afghanistan, as announced on 17 August 2021. After the U.S. fulfilled its commitment to withdraw all its forces, the Afghan government's strength diminished, resulting in the ousting of President Ashraf Ghani and the Taliban's successful return to power.

### **Indonesia's Response to the Doha Agreement**

Indonesia, represented by the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Indonesia, Retno Marsudi, participated in the signing of the Doha Agreement between the U.S. and the Taliban, along with several co-facilitating countries such as Qatar, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Pakistan, India, and Turkey in Doha, Qatar. Indonesia's involvement as a co-facilitator was due to a request from Qatar, which observed Indonesia's active engagement in supporting peace in Afghanistan. Although Indonesia's role was not central during the signing of the Doha Agreement, its presence reflected Indonesia's significant position in the political dynamics between the Afghan government and the

Taliban. Indonesia's participation in the signing demonstrated the country's full commitment to continue supporting Afghanistan's peace process.

### **Indonesia's Foreign Policy Efforts in Afghanistan Post- Doha Agreement**

At the beginning of 2020, a delegation from Indonesia, consisting of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, the Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI), and the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia (KBRI) in Doha, held meetings with Afghan political representatives on 16-17 February 2020 in Doha, Qatar (BBC, 2020). During this meeting, Indonesia reaffirmed its commitment to supporting peace in Afghanistan and expressed its readiness to facilitate intra-Afghan meetings. Additionally, Indonesia expressed its willingness to host the Indonesia-Afghanistan Ulama Conference and understand the post-peace agreement guidelines between the U.S. and the Taliban.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, Indonesia played a crucial role in supporting peace in Afghanistan after the Doha Agreement was reached between the U.S. and the Taliban (Andreas, 2020). Through a structured and comprehensive approach, Indonesia reaffirmed its commitment to main pillars. First, Indonesia utilized the influence of ulama (Islamic scholars), who have significant authority among the predominantly Muslim Afghan population. Collaboration with the Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) became an effective tool to foster dialogue and understanding of universal Islamic values and principles of peace.

Second, Indonesia actively promoted the empowerment of Afghan women, recognising the critical challenges women face in obtaining their rights in the context of the prolonged conflict. Indonesia's role in empowering Afghan women was demonstrated through various programs aimed at strengthening women's participation in peace efforts.

Following the Doha Agreement, Indonesia's foreign policy showed a strong commitment to supporting the peace process in Afghanistan. This commitment was reflected in the implementation of six key activities designed to reinforce peace and stability in the country.

1. Indonesia launched the Indonesia-Afghan Women's Solidarity Network (IAWSN) as a platform to promote women's participation in peace processes and development. IAWSN brought together women from Indonesia and Afghanistan to strengthen women's empowerment in Afghanistan and improve bilateral relations between the two countries. One significant initiative was training midwives in Afghanistan.
2. Indonesia actively participated in the Special Envoy/Representative Consultations of Like-Minded Countries (Quint), a forum aimed at coordinating international support for peace in Afghanistan.

Indonesia's political stance and policy are grounded in the values reflected in the country's constitution, as mandated by the **1945 Constitution**. This constitution emphasises Indonesia's commitment to achieving world peace based on freedom, eternal

peace, and social justice. This constitutional mandate strengthens Indonesia's position in addressing international security issues, including the complex security issues in Afghanistan that have broad global implications (Dupree, 2024).

International security concerns related to Afghanistan, such as drug trafficking, terrorist groups, extremism, and illegal migration flows, are of serious concern to Indonesia and other countries around the world. In this context, Indonesia actively participates in various international forums to advocate for peace in Afghanistan, taking into account the broader impact on regional and global security. Indonesia's involvement in peace efforts in Afghanistan not only reflects its international responsibility as a member of the global community but also serves as a strategic step to protect its national interests. By promoting inclusive and sustainable peace, Indonesia hopes to contribute positively to long-term solutions for the prolonged conflict in Afghanistan. Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi stated that Indonesia, in its efforts to assist Afghanistan, focused on two main issues: cooperation between ulama and enhancing the role of Afghan women. Marsudi stressed that Indonesia's interest in Afghanistan was to ensure that the Afghan people could enjoy peace, and prosperity, and obtain their rightful rights.

However, Indonesia also emphasised that, in supporting peace in Afghanistan, the principles of Afghan-owned and Afghan-led must remain the cornerstone (Republika, 2021). This shows that Indonesia does not intend to interfere in Afghanistan's domestic politics but rather provides space for Afghanistan to determine its future. This approach reflects Indonesia's commitment to the principles of national independence and respect for the sovereignty of every nation, while still supporting international efforts to facilitate peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Following the Taliban's return to power in 2021, Indonesia adopted a neutral stance. As of now, Indonesia has not officially recognised the Taliban government. Indonesia has set several conditions that the Taliban must meet before being recognized as a legitimate government. These conditions include the establishment of an inclusive government that represents various ethnic and political groups in Afghanistan, the enforcement of human rights for all citizens, and guarantees that Afghanistan's territory will not be used as a base for global terrorism.

With these considerations, Indonesia continues to observe and monitor the situation in Afghanistan, waiting for the fulfillment of these necessary conditions before making an official decision regarding the recognition of the Taliban government (International Crisis Group, 2020) Indonesia's policy towards Afghanistan underwent significant adjustments following the political transition in 2021. Previously, international efforts to achieve peace between the Taliban and President Ghani's government faced major challenges and failed to reach substantial agreements (Katzman, Kenneth, and Clayton Thomas. 2017).

After the Taliban's return to power, Indonesia adopted a neutral and passive stance, neither actively opposing nor recognising the new government. This cautious

approach reflects Indonesia's strategy in responding to Afghanistan's political and security dynamics while maintaining its commitment to peace, human rights, and social justice. Indonesia believes that recognition of the Taliban government must be based on critical conditions, such as the formation of an inclusive government representing Afghanistan's diverse ethnic and political groups, robust enforcement of human rights for all citizens, and assurances that Afghanistan will not become a hub for global terrorism. At the same time, Indonesia remained engaged in supporting humanitarian and development efforts in Afghanistan through education programs, women's empowerment, humanitarian aid, and development cooperation. This "soft approach" allows Indonesia to continue contributing positively to the Afghan people without becoming directly involved in the internal political dynamics. Thus, Indonesia's policy towards Afghanistan not only reflects its response to the changing political situation but also demonstrates its commitment to humanitarian values, global peace, and social justice, in line with the principles enshrined in its constitution and national foreign policy.

## CONCLUSION

Indonesia has played a significant role in supporting peace efforts in Afghanistan after the 2020 Doha Agreement, marking a crucial step towards long-term stability in the conflict-ridden country. Indonesia's development assistance, particularly in infrastructure and education, has also contributed significantly to strengthening Afghanistan's economic and social capacities, forming an essential foundation for sustainable peace. By committing to liberal values such as democracy, human rights, and sustainable development, Indonesia has demonstrated its role as a responsible global actor and inspired hope for a safer and more stable future for Afghanistan. Indonesia's policy towards Afghanistan can be summarised as follows:

1. **Gradual Transition of Policy:** Indonesia's policy has undergone a gradual transition, as seen from the change in approach and focus on cooperation between religious scholars and the role of women.
2. **Challenges in Mediating Peace:** Despite the challenges faced in mediating between the Taliban and President Ghani's government, Indonesia has continued to make significant contributions through development assistance and support for reconciliation processes.
3. **Neutral Stance on the Taliban's Return:** Since the Taliban's return to power, Indonesia has maintained a neutral and passive political stance, especially as Indonesia has not yet recognised the Taliban government. This demonstrates that Indonesia has preserved its independence in addressing Afghanistan's internal conflict while maintaining its commitment to peace and stability at the international level.

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