MULTI-TRACK DIPLOMACY AS INDONESIA'S STRATEGY IN MITIGATING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract: At this time, every country, especially since the beginning of 2020, struggles to face the global pandemic, namely COVID-19. Each country has its ways, methods, and strategies for dealing with this pandemic. Indonesia is implementing multi-track diplomacy in its struggle to face COVID-19. The aim of the multi-track diplomacy carried out by the Indonesian government is to increase the medical equipment needed by the Indonesian people and primarily to obtain vaccines for the health of the Indonesian population. Diplomacy in getting this vaccine will be an important issue that continues because all countries will also need the vaccine in the face of this COVID-19 pandemic, which is likely to end for a long time.

Keywords: multi-track diplomacy, strategy, COVID-19

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INTRODUCTION
Since the Second World War ended, the world has again faced severe problems due to the emergence of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) caused by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2) virus. The coronavirus causes sufferers to have difficulty breathing, high fever, and cough. In more severe cases, infection with this virus causes pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure, and death. Standard recommendations for preventing transmission are frequent handwashing with soap, wearing a face mask, and covering your mouth when coughing and sneezing, and keeping your distance when in crowds.

This virus was first discovered in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. This virus spreads quickly throughout the world until now, COVID-19 has become the most influential humanitarian disaster socially and economically, so WHO declared it a global pandemic (Umar & Indrayani, 2020; Wajdi, Kuswandi, et al., 2020; Wajdi, Ubaidillah, et al., 2020). Covid-19 cases have been confirmed to reach 4,347,935, with the world death toll reaching 297,241 worldwide. Countries in the world that experience the highest Covid-19 cases include the United States with a total of 1.3 million cases, Russia with a total of 262 thousand cases, England with 233 thousand cases, Spain with 229 thousand cases, Italy with 223 thousand cases, Brazil with 188 thousand cases, Germany with 173 thousand cases, Turkey with a total of 155 thousand cases, France with a total of 139 thousand cases, Iran with a total of 116 thousand cases, China with a total of 84 thousand cases, and India with a total of 81 thousand cases. Meanwhile, in Indonesia alone, the
Covid-19 cases were confirmed to have reached 16,496 with the total number of deaths reaching 1,076. ([www.WHO.org](http://www.WHO.org))

The unexpected and rapid spread of the virus has overwhelmed many countries in dealing with COVID-19. Until now, the efforts of countries in the world to reduce, limit, and inhibit the spread of the virus are by implementing social distancing policies and “lockdown.” This effort has been successfully carried out in China as well as in South Korea. However, not all countries can enforce these policies and have the same social, economic, and political systems, so that success varies from one country to another.

The need for quick action in overcoming COVID-19 encourages the government to aggressively carry out international cooperation to overcome this global COVID-19 pandemic. International collaboration is carried out to ensure access and availability of medical supplies such as medicines and medical devices to deal with COVID-19, considering that Indonesia has limited health resources. This is evidenced by the recognition of the Expert Council of the Indonesian Public Health Expert Association and the Association of Indonesian Hospitals, Hermawan Saputra, that the average hospital in Indonesia is not ready to handle COVID-19 cases ([liputan6 : 2020](http://liputan6.com)). International cooperation is the only way to deal with this situations, and carrying out diplomacy between countries is one of the critical points.

**Multi-Track Diplomacy: Conceptual Approach**

Diplomacy is generally defined as an official relationship between two or more countries for various reasons: economic, socio-cultural, political, and security. Diplomacy can play a role in 1) Establishing relationships between individuals (people to people contact), 2) Strengthening processes that build harmony, 3) Providing forums for designing and implementing international policies, 4) Business cooperation and international trade. And 5) Health and
disaster management. The role of diplomacy in handling COVID-19 is implementing the fifth function, namely health and disaster management.

Multi-Track Diplomacy is a diplomacy concept that describes the process of world peace in the international system through a combination of government channel diplomacy, group channel diplomacy, and individual channel diplomacy. The main goal is to create world peace to integrated peacebuilding using soft power (Notter & Diamond, 1996).

The multi-track system emerged due to the purely inefficient mediation of the government. Furthermore, the escalation of intrastate conflict in the 1990s confirmed that "Track One diplomacy" was not an effective method for securing international cooperation or resolving disputes. Instead, there is a need for an interpersonal approach in addition to government mediation. For this reason, former diplomat Joseph Montville created Track Two Diplomacy to engage citizens with diversity and expertise in the mediation process. But the complexity and breadth of this unofficial diplomacy are not covered by two-track diplomatic activities. Louise Diamond then coined the term multi-lane diplomacy to involve all aspects of mediation from the grassroots level of society to high-level meetings of heads of state. Multi-line diplomacy makes use of all levels of an organization to determine needs and facilitate communication between all societies.

This multi-track design is interrelated and equally important in diplomatic efforts. Each pathway has its resources, values, and approaches, and because they are interlinked, they can work more strongly when coordinated. There are nine lines in a multi-lane diplomacy system. First, the government, or peace efforts through diplomacy. Second, non-government / professional, or peace efforts through conflict resolution. Third, business, or peace efforts through trade. Fourth, ordinary citizens, or peace efforts through personal involvement. Fifth, research, training and education, or peace efforts through learning. Sixth, activism, or peace efforts through advocacy. Seventh, religion, or peace efforts through faith. Eighth, funding, or peace efforts through the provision of resources and funds. Ninth, communication and media, or peace efforts through information (McDonald, 2012).

In facing the global Covid-19 pandemic, the Indonesian government needs to carry out this multi-lane diplomacy. Because relying on formal diplomacy alone will not be enough. Therefore, the Indonesian government encourages not only the foreign ministry and the health ministry to

deal with the Covid-19 pandemic, but also other ministries or official agencies such as ESDM, the Coordinating Minister for the Economy, and the Ministry of BUMN and BKPM.

METHOD
The type of qualitative research used in this research is a case study that will allow the researcher to explore a single phenomenon in the form of a case under study, which is limited by time and activity (program, event, process, institution, or social group). The selection of a qualitative approach in this study is based on Creswell's opinion (Creswell, 2002) regarding qualitative research characteristics, which include:

1. The concept is immature due to the lack of theory and previous research,
2. The view that existing theories may be inaccurate, inadequate, incorrect, or ambiguous,
3. The need to explore and explain a phenomenon and to develop theories, or
4. The nature of the phenomenon may not match quantitative measures.

The qualitative approach has research characteristics: constructing the reality of socio-cultural meaning, examining the interaction of events and processes, involving complex and challenging to measure variables, having a close relationship with the context, involving the researcher as fully as having a natural background, using purposive samples, applying inductive analysis, prioritizing "meaning" behind reality, and ask the question "why" (why), not "what" (what).

This data collection using a literature study. This method is a data collection technique that is carried out by reading, studying, and studying books, scientific magazines, mass media, internet sites, and other related sources. To gain knowledge of the critical theories, terms, and definitions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
As a strategy to overcome COVID-19, participation, and diplomacy from all parties is needed to obtain medicines and medical devices because Indonesia has to compete with big countries such as Europe and the United States. The government has strongly encouraged the private sector’s involvement, which has been given the convenience of business and investment. The results can be seen when South Korea only provides coronavirus test kits to Indonesia and the United States. India, as a producer of chloroquine raw materials, only provides its raw materials to Indonesia. Meanwhile, China, apart from assisting Iran and Italy, also offered assistance to Indonesia. This happened at the encouragement of BPKM and the Ministry of SOE. This proves that Indonesia’s multi-line diplomacy through business channels or the private sector is significant. This also proves that apart from the government, the private sector can move in large numbers to tackle COVID-19, such as distributing medical equipment and others.

The Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Retno Marsudi, in a virtual meeting of the Ministerial Coordination Group on COVID 19 (MCGC) emphasized the importance of international cooperation with an innovative approach and involving multiple stakeholders, especially the private sector, in overcoming the global pandemic situation. COVID-19. The private sector makes it possible to share information about each other's capacities and resources, thus opening up opportunities for combining each company's comparative advantages in producing and distributing supplies of medical equipment needed to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. Apart from reflecting multi-line business or private sector diplomacy, this is also closely related to communication channels and media diplomacy. International cooperation emphasized by Foreign Minister Retno utilizes an information media platform to share and collaborate to provide medical equipment supplies to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic.
Since the emergence of COVID-19, communication, and information media have played a vital role in handling COVID-19 cases. Communication and information media provide essential information related to the spread of COVID-19 to common protocols and policies to implement social distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Almost all countries in the world use the media to monitor the spread of the virus and observe their people in obeying the rules to prevent the spread of this virus.

Diplomacy is an essential tool in the implementation of a nation's foreign policy. The development of diplomacy has also reached a system that is not only centered on the state as the leading implementer. The world is known for its multi-track diplomacy. This multi-track system emerged due to the inefficiency of purely government mediation. Furthermore, the escalation of intranational conflict in the 1990s confirmed that "Track One diplomacy" was not an effective method of securing international cooperation or resolving disputes. Instead, there is a need for an interpersonal approach in addition to government mediation.

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All parties' participation and diplomacy are needed to obtain medicines and medical devices because Indonesia has to compete with big countries such as Europe and the United States. The government has strongly encouraged the private sector's involvement, which has been given the convenience of business and investment. The results can be seen when South Korea only provides coronavirus test kits to Indonesia and the United States. India, as a producer of chloroquine raw materials, only provides its raw materials to Indonesia. Meanwhile, China, apart from assisting Iran and Italy, also offered assistance to Indonesia. This happened at the encouragement of BPKM and the Ministry of SOE.

In practice, this crisis has pushed countries to prioritize their interests, giving rise to competition rather than cooperation. One example is the disputes between European Union countries. As cases of COVID-19 surged in Italy, the government asked neighbors for medical supplies. However, Germany and France have even banned the export of products that fall into this category.

When China offered mask assistance to European countries, the Netherlands, Austria, and Finland publicly rejected the plan. Simultaneously, Spain, France, Belgium, Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Slovenia, and Luxembourg supported the aid scheme. This further shows the divisions among the members of the European Union (detik, 2020).

The chaos of world politics amid a pandemic must certainly make Indonesia careful not to make the wrong move. Indonesia's primary interest today is the safety of its citizens. Various assistance from other countries is urgently needed by Indonesia so that this country can immediately cope with the pandemic.

Collaborative efforts have been made, for example, between ASEAN and the United States. In a video conference discussing developments and cooperation that can be done to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic on April 1, 2020, officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Transportation, Immigration officials from ASEAN Member countries, and top US officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health, Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), US Agency for International Development (USAID) and National Security Council (NSC).
Indonesia was represented by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Indonesia to ASEAN, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs produced an agreement to increase cooperation in handling the COVID-19 pandemic. Indonesia expresses its support for increasing collaboration between ASEAN and the United States in dealing with COVID-19, significantly expanding access to capacity building for ASEAN medical personnel through CDC and special health scholarships through USAID. Indonesia also conveyed the importance of collective efforts to maintain economic stability and ensure that the goods’ supply chain is not disrupted amid the current global situation.

Foreign Minister Retno also emphasized that the multilateral system must be able to facilitate the movement and flow of goods in order to continue to sustain global trade and supply chains. This virtual meeting resulted in a Declaration of “We need strong global cooperation and solidarity to fight COVID-19” which contained various elements related to the challenges of health, economy, finance and the prevention of the Covid-19 pandemic, including the dimensions of disinformation which often increase the risk of disease spread and have the potential to inhibit effective and efficient global health response.

The cooperation forum of countries that are members of the International Coordination Group on COVID-19 (ICGC) continues to move forward. On April 28, 2020, the Indonesian Foreign Minister again participated in the teleconference meeting with (eleven) Foreign Ministers of ICGC member countries. Other foreign ministers who participated were from South Africa, Australia, Brazil, England, Germany, Morocco, France, Peru, Singapore, Turkey, and Canada. On April 28, 2020, the meeting took the big theme of strengthening multilateral cooperation in handling Covid-19. At the meeting, the Indonesian Foreign Minister emphasized that "the world community's trust in the principles of multilateralism will only be realized if multilateral cooperation can bring concrete benefits to the world’s population." Therefore, in concrete terms, Foreign Minister Retno conveyed Indonesia's proposal to establish a joint platform to share information about the production capacity of companies in the medical device sector. Indonesia proposed a concept entitled 'Recommendations for Compilation of a List of Companies with the Potential to Participate in the Provision of Medical Devices for Covid-19 Handling' ('Recommendation to Develop a List of Potential Companies to Participate in the Supplies of Medical Goods for Covid-19').

This platform is expected to enable companies from various countries to increase the production capacity of medical devices and medicines for handling Covid-19, including through joint production schemes. Furthermore, the Indonesian Foreign Minister again called for the importance of medication for managing Covid-19 to be evenly available and at affordable prices, especially for developing countries.

The presence of the ICGC, a cross-regional cooperation group that aims to strengthen international coordination for handling the Covid-19 pandemic and manage the social, economic impact that is generated quite effectively as a medium for multilateral diplomacy on a global scale.

Indonesia’s steps are undoubtedly crucial because previously, on April 2, 2020, for the first time, Indonesia, together with Ghana, Liechtenstein, Norway, Singapore, and Switzerland, passed a UN General Assembly resolution entitled "Global Solidarity to Fight COVID-19," which was decided by acclamation in United Nations Headquarters in New York This resolution is the...
first product produced by the United Nations regarding COVID 19 since the announcement of the global pandemic status by WHO on March 11, 2020. This resolution emphasizes a political message about the importance of unity, solidarity, and international cooperation in efforts to mitigate the pandemic global COVID-19.

The absence of a single country is immune to the coronavirus, and the high death rate in many countries makes international unity, solidarity, and cooperation necessary. Indonesia’s resolution conveyed a message to the international community that the United Nations, as a universal organization, has a central role in coordinating global responses. The UN must also be able to give hope to the international community that with cooperation, solidarity, and the right policies, every country can overcome this crisis.

The role of the United Nations is reflected in the resolution, such as requesting cooperation from countries to curb the spread of the virus, mitigating impacts through information exchange, collaboration with scientists' knowledge, and acceptable practices from each country. The resolution also affirms the World Health Organization (WHO) ’s a central role in the vanguard of coordination with all international community elements. In particular, the solution also gives appreciation to all workers in the health sector, the medical profession, and researchers who continue to work under challenging conditions.

According to WHO data taken on April 3, 2020, globally, there are more than 900,000 total cases of COVID-19 with a death rate of more than 45,693 people. Indonesia is one of the UN member countries that is quite active in the field of health diplomacy. Indonesia is currently the Chair of the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative. This forum discusses and initiates health issues and multilateral political policies, consisting of Brazil, Norway, France, Senegal, Thailand, and Indonesia. Also, Indonesia is currently a member of the WHO Executive Board. This WHO executive body discusses and decides on the direction of policies and the world health agency’s work plan (kemlu, 2020).

Apart from the government’s active role in forging international cooperation in overcoming the pandemic, the private sector’s role cannot be overlooked. Getting medical aid and personal protective equipment from friendly countries is an achievement in which the private sector cannot be understated. Participation and diplomacy from all parties in obtaining drugs and medical devices amid competition with big countries such as Europe and the United States are needed. The private sector’s involvement in the implementation of multi-lane diplomacy is inseparable from the facilities they have received so far. So far, the private sector has been given business and investment facilities by the Indonesian government. When South Korea is committed to providing coronavirus test kits to Indonesia and America, or India, as a producer of chloroquine raw materials, it only provides its raw materials to Indonesia; this is a successful implementation of Indonesia’s multi-track diplomacy. Apart from assisting Iran and Italy, China also offered assistance to Indonesia, based on encouragement from the BPKM and the Ministry of SOE.

Vaccine Diplomacy

Each country will continue to seek ways to tackle COVID-19 by providing vaccines to ward off viruses and infectious diseases. As explained by a doctor from the alodokter.com website, the most fundamental benefit of vaccines is an effort to prevent infectious diseases. This is because vaccines can provide your body with defense and protection from many dangerous contagious diseases. Vaccines are substances or compounds that function to form endurance. Almost all countries in the world already have cases of Covid-19 infection, and the urgency to reduce the spread rate will make countries compete to get the vaccine.

As soon as every country needs to have and provide vaccines, the Indonesian government should immediately increase vaccine diplomacy related to the handling of Covid-19, which is
expected to be completed next year. Concerns that there will be efforts by several/many countries to compete for vaccines when they are produced and distributed will create the potential for a competition that will lead to conflict between countries.

Countries that will find it challenging to obtain vaccines are developing countries which, nota bene, do not have the financial strength to buy vaccines in large quantities compared to developed countries and are financially strong. For this reason, diplomacy in developing countries is needed for at least two things, firstly, so that vaccine acquisition is according to the demand of developing countries and secondly so that the costs incurred to obtain the Covid-19 vaccine are not burdensome and affordable for developing countries, especially Indonesia.

For this purpose, the Government of Indonesia is establishing international cooperation with many parties to gain the fastest access to the Covid-19 vaccine, where the vaccine is the starting point for recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. The Indonesian government’s move is part of several countries in the world to obtain the same rights to get vaccines to ensure their citizens’ safety.

The seriousness of Indonesia’s diplomacy efforts was conveyed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Retno Marsudi, who explained the developments regarding the diplomacy of the Corona Covid-19 virus vaccine. The Foreign Minister emphasized that vaccines are a game-changer that will be the starting point for recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic. Consistently, Indonesian diplomacy moves quickly to meet the needs of medical devices, medicines, and vaccines.

Just like many countries in the world, Indonesia continues to strive as soon as possible to obtain the right and safe vaccines in sufficient quantities to overcome domestic Covid-19. Various attempts have been made to procure vaccines at home and by cooperating with various parties abroad. As soon as it is crucial to fulfilling the need for vaccines to tackle Covid 19, the Indonesian Government through Minister of Foreign Affairs Retno Marsudi, mentioned several companies from various countries that are currently collaborating with Indonesia in developing vaccines, including Bio Farma with Sinovac from China for the type of virus inactivation, then Kalbe Farma with Genexine from South Korea for the DNA vaccine type, and the third is Bio Farma with CEPI.

The form of multi-track and multilateral diplomacy, especially in the health sector, is reflected in the collaboration between Bio Farma and Sinovac, Kalbe Farma with Genexine, and Farma with CEPI (Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations) based in Norway.

One of the steps taken is to collaborate with several countries currently conducting clinical trials in an intensive manner. President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) said that Indonesia’s vaccine diplomacy was the most advanced and prosperous. At least three major countries have committed substantial assistance, namely China, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom.

As part of the short-term steps in procuring the Covid-19 vaccine, by the end of 2020, 20 million to 30 million doses of the Covid-19 vaccine from Sinovac and Sinopharm will arrive in the country. This will continue in early 2021 with a total of 340 million doses of vaccine. President Jokowi stated that the grant from the United Arab Emirates was one of Indonesia’s diplomacy efforts. According to Jokowi, Indonesia’s vaccine diplomacy is the most advanced. Furthermore, Jokowi also explained that this vaccine from China is to weaken. This is different from the vaccines developed in Indonesia by domestic parties. Red and White Vaccine is a recombinant protein process. This program is a long-term program that will be ready for clinical trials in January 2021 for ten months. A total of 350 million doses of the Red and White vaccine will be prepared by the end of 2021.
CONCLUSION
Multi-track diplomacy emphasizes not only the practice of inter-government diplomacy but also the roles of various parties for the success of diplomacy. The case of the COVID-19 pandemic shows the importance of Indonesia’s multi-lane diplomacy. Although, until now, the pandemic has not yet passed, Indonesia has managed to obtain medical equipment and medical aid through the practice of multi-line diplomacy.

The Government’s efforts through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in carrying out Indonesian diplomacy related to the accessibility and affordability of vaccines and encouraging the importance of access and affordability of COVID-19 medicines and vaccines for Indonesia in particular and other countries should be appreciated.

Even though there are still weaknesses in Indonesia’s efforts where the COVID-19 diplomacy model that is being implemented has not been able to bring the form and pattern of handling the pandemic in Indonesia to the international world, at that level, Indonesia is still following the big countries. There is no belief yet about a pandemic handling model that can be brought onto the international stage.

Although many cooperative relationships are bilateral, regional, and multilateral, Indonesia must also focus on its national interests in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. This is based on the idea that, after COVID-19, the handling will be more focused on each country. What is crucial in the future is diplomacy in obtaining vaccines for the prevention, control, and treatment of Indonesian citizens so that Indonesia’s interests in ensuring citizens’ health can be fulfilled through continuous multi-line diplomacy efforts.

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